



LITERARY *avalcade*

TEACHER EDITION • FEBRUARY 1954 • VOL. 6, NO. 5

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*“The play’s
the thing,”*

says Hamlet...



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—The Editors

L I T E R A R Y *Cavalcade*

A MONTHLY FOR ENGLISH CLASSES PUBLISHED BY SCHOLASTIC MAGAZINES



Airy Somersault • A photograph by Ray Atkinson

FEBRUARY, 1954 • VOLUME 6 • NUMBER 5

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OUR FRONT COVER



Looks easy? The skier on our cover executes a flip from a snow cornice in the Blue Mountains in Oregon. He was caught in mid-air by a well-known Oregon photographer, Ray Atkinson. The photo appears in the U. S. Camera Annual, 1954.



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Chucklebait Back Cover



SUNDAY AFTERNOON

*Suddenly the whole day seemed changed—but
nothing had really changed at all*

By LUCILE VAUGHAN PAYNE

Illustrated by Katherine Churchill Tracy

OUTSIDE the house, Vernay Street trembled in midafternoon sunlight. Elizabeth, pausing on her way from the kitchen to the porch, shifted her gaze from the scene framed by the screen and glanced at her watery image in the glass pane of the front door. For a moment she stared at herself stonily. The mouth that was reflected back at her grimaced vaguely in response.

Thinking of all the food she had just eaten, Elizabeth shuddered. I have no soul, she thought. How can you have a soul and still eat like a horse? Did Heloise eat like a horse? Did Juliet sit and stuff with roast pork and green beans and candied yams? Elizabeth opened the screen and walked out. Her mother was sitting in the pillowed swing, her hands folded comfortably in

her lap as she watched with bright, unflagging interest her own particular stretch of Vernay Street. How can she look so comfortable and *so interested*—yes, actually interested! What is there to see? Mrs. Rossiter bending over her flower bed. Simmons' cat washing its face. Nosy old Mrs. Sprunt squeaking away in her chintz-covered rocker and fanning herself.

Sunday afternoon! How I hate Sunday afternoons.

With lowering brows she watched Rose Marie Rossiter run out of the house and climb into Willie Kline's dusty roadster. She thinks she's so popular!

"Well, young lady," said her mother, "What are you up to this afternoon?"

"Up to?" said Elizabeth. What is there to be up to? Life is passing me by. Maybe it's just around the corner. Maybe it lurks on Vine Street, or Logan, or Mackay. It is not here.

"I think I'll go for a walk," she said broodingly.

She went down the steps, sauntered slowly down the walk. Beneath her feet the blossoms of the catalpa tree disintegrated, leaving a faint impalpable odor on the summer air. A fat russet worm made his leisurely way across the sidewalk, and the patterned shade of the trees moved lightly. Dappled with sunlight, the lovely young creature . . . yes, Mrs. Sprunt, I know you are sitting there on your porch watching me. Don't expect me to look up. I will not. I will not.

She looked up and waved vaguely at the old woman. I know what you're thinking. There goes Elizabeth Kane.

Condensed from *Seventeen*. Copyright 1949 by Triangle Publications, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publisher. This story is included in *Nineteen From Seventeen*, ed. by Bryna Ivens, published by J. B. Lippincott Co.

you're saying; just look at that, getting so grown up. Be sixteen pretty soon, won't she? All right! Say it, say it, Almost-Sweet-Sixteen-and-Never-Been-Kissed. She passed out of the range of Mrs. Sprunt's vision and felt the tension leaving her muscles. When I think somebody is watching me, my legs begin to jerk and my neck gets stiff. That's a funny thing.

Do you suppose I'm the only girl in this town who is almost sixteen years old and hasn't a date? At the next corner, three houses down, that's where Robert Mayo lives. What do you care where he lives? You must not, under any circumstances, Elizabeth, turn your head to look in that direction. He's probably at the ball game or something, anyway. Or maybe he's out with a girl. Some of the girls say he's too shy to ask anybody for a date, but I bet he does; he's just the secret type and doesn't let anybody know.

She raised her head high and crossed the street at Robert's corner, sternly keeping her eyes straight ahead.

What's so wonderful about Robert Mayo? Just another dumb boy. All boys are dumb. Maybe if I walk just as slow as I can he'll see me, and maybe if he sees me, he'll . . .

She breathed more easily as distance grew between herself and the corner. Suddenly she felt extraordinarily gay and daring and she began to walk more swiftly. Oh, Elizabeth, you are in love. How wonderful and terrible it is. She closed her eyes dreamily and thought about it. In love. It was such an enormous thing to think that it frightened her. But you must face the facts, Elizabeth. Even though it's hopeless, even though others would laugh if they knew, you can be brave enough to admit to yourself that you are in love. It is a far, far braver thing that I do now . . .

A FIGURE brushed by her, and she jumped, startled. "Oh, hello, Elizabeth," he said.

"Why . . . hello, Robert." My hair! Does it look all right? Is he going to stop? Will he walk with me? If I could only think of something to say, something to make him laugh or something.

He hesitated only a moment and then rushed on, mumbling about being late. Elizabeth kept smiling stiffly until he had disappeared around a corner. Her hands were cold and perspiring.

I hate him, she thought passionately. I hate all men. He couldn't stop to talk to me—not even for a minute. She plunged ahead with set jaw. Finally she realized that she had reached Vernay Park. She had walked with head

down, unseeing, and now the green turf stretched on either side of the walk, cool and inviting. Her feet were hot. She stepped into the grass and went toward the trees, still trembling inwardly in a queer way.

After a while she fished a nickel from her pocket and went toward the concession, debating whether to buy ice cream or a cold drink. Under the trees a fair maiden passed. She allowed herself a silent gust of cynical laughter. Ah, yes. Ah, yes. Floating like a zephyr on the soft summer air.

At the door of the concession she drew a quick breath and walked quickly away. Robert was inside, drinking a soda. The plate glass windows reflected her image as she rushed by. I'm ugly! she thought in terror. The curl is coming out of my hair, my dress is wrinkled, my nose is too big. They are in there now, saying, "Look at that girl." Look at me, my knuckles are too big and my neck looks scrawny and the bone in my wrist sticks out like a door-knob.

She sat down on a stone bench beside the little fishpond, clutching at the rough edge with her hands. The sun beat down. Freckles, she thought. While I sit here the freckles pop out on my great big nose and my hair gets stringy.

An old woman, her face the color of sandpaper, walked by and glanced at her. She knows, thought Elizabeth. When that old woman was a girl, no man ever looked at her, either. We recognize each other. We are kin. She averted her eyes and flopped down on the grass.

"Well, gee whiz," said Robert, above her. "I was hoping I'd find you here."

She lay quite still and looked at the matted grass. She could see a black ant hauling a bread crumb through the moist corridors among the roots. It's nothing, she told herself. He just wants to know whether I've seen Joe Zilch or something. She tilted her head upward and squinted through the sun.

"Well, hi," she said.

He sat down on the bench and began whittling on a twig. His foot almost touched her elbow. She saw that one shoelace was broken and tied in a knot. A little cascade of shavings began to fall on the grass.

"Do you know what's on at the Lyric?" he asked.

"No." Her heart began to thud and she swerved her head around to look at the fish pond. A snake doctor was winging around in circles and she watched it very closely. You think he'll ask you to go to the Lyric with him? Ha.

"It's one of those June Allyson pictures. You like her?"

"Oh . . . sure." She had to repress a gust of nervous laughter.

"Well . . . I mean, would you like to see it? I mean, I'd like to take you, if you want to go, I mean . . ."

Why, he is shy! she thought. She felt a delightful sense of ease and discovery. "Why, yes, thank you. I'd love to go, Robert." She got to her feet and pushed back her damp hair. "I was just about ready to go home. Coming?" As easy as that.

"Sure."

And they were walking across the park together. It was no dream. It was real. He asked me, she thought. He asked *me*! She wanted to grab all the trees and shake them and bring the leaves down over her hair. She felt like singing and running in all directions at once; at the same time something sweet and sluggish crept through her veins, dragging at her footsteps. They passed the concession again, and the windows reflected their passage. Why, I'm very pretty! thought Elizabeth. I'm almost beautiful. Surreptitiously she gripped one wrist between her fingers and felt the bone and thought, how delicate it is, how small.

WHEN they came to Robert's corner he continued to walk down Vernay Street beside her. She liked the way he began to laugh with her, his eyes curious but friendly. She liked his long, loose-jointed stride as he ranged along beside her. She liked everything about him; she was having a good time and she was not at all in love.

Willie Kline's roadster came boiling past and stopped in front of Rossiter's. Elizabeth waved at Rose Marie. We'll have to double-date sometime.

"Hello, Mrs. Sprunt," she called gently as they passed the old woman, still sitting on her front porch. How serene and kind she looks, thought Elizabeth. And, I wish that I had brought her some ice cream from the concession.

Her own front porch was empty now. Probably her mother had gone inside to get supper on the table. "I'll be back in about an hour," said Robert. "Will you be ready?"

"Mmm-hmm." She watched him go a little way down the street and then went quietly into the house. The clatter of dishes from the kitchen was a reassuring and welcome sound. Home was a nice place.

There was no sunlight now to reflect her image from the glass pane in the door. But Elizabeth did not even stop to see. She looked just the same, she knew. Everything was just the same. And entirely different.

Bow-wows aren't the same the dog world over

How to Bark Abroad

By Leslie Lieber and Charles D. Rice

LEAFFING through a book in the Italian language the other day, we were suddenly brought up short by the following passage: "The little dog ran through the streets of Naples barking *boo-boo, boo-boo, boo-boo* at all the passers-by."

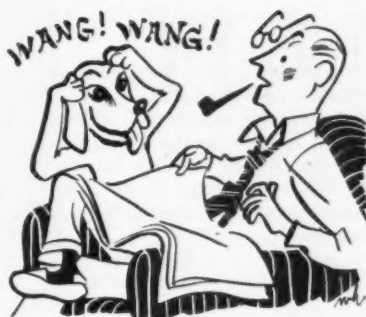
We expected the next sentence to announce that this dog who spouted *boo-boo* had been whisked away to the nearest canine psycho ward for observation. But when the author failed to comment on this pooch's peculiar behavior, a disconcerting thought dawned on us.

Could it be that all the world doesn't see eye-to-eye on the fact that dogs say either *bow-wow* or *woof-woof*? Could it be that roosters *cock-a-doodle-do* in one country and *cock-a-doodle-don't* in another? We had always taken it for granted that even though the world was divided on many issues, at least everybody agreed that cows go *moo* and ducks say *quack-quack*.

Deciding that these questions merited a survey, we immediately phoned the Italian Embassy in Washington. Our question as to how dogs bark on the Italian peninsula caused a flurry of embarrassment at the other end of the line. A *chargé d'affaires* refused point-blank to bark over the telephone. Finally, however, an underling agreed to bark. It came through sharp and unmistakable: *boo-boo, boo-boo* (spelled in Italian *bu-bu*).

International Barnyard

The news that 45,000,000 Italians are convinced their dogs bark like Bing Crosby was provocative enough to war-



rant a full-scale investigation of the whole international barnyard. So for the next few days, the telephone wires between us and foreign embassies, consulates, and U. N. delegations buzzed while diplomats alternately barked, neighed, mooed, roared, and meowed into the telephone.

We must admit that our hopes for world unity have not been greatly heartened by our findings. Take the cow, for instance. Here's a simple-minded galoot who has gone around for centuries uttering one measly word. If you think people see eye-to-eye on what that word is, you're sadly mistaken. *Moo* is American. The French have the piquant notion that Bossy gives out with a nasal *meuh* (pronounced as "mur" in *demur*).

To give *meuh* a fair test, the writers eavesdropped on a shipment of Normandy cattle being unloaded from a transatlantic freighter. All we can say is that these cows may have been saying *meuh* when they left Cherbourg,

but they certainly were *moo-ing* like mad by the time they reached Hoboken, New Jersey.

In India, a country where cows are sacred, they never say *moo*. Ganges cows say *moe* (rhymes with "schmoe"). This is pretty hard to believe. In fact, if America had cows who said *moe*, we'd probably worship them, too.

Frankly we don't know what to make of the rooster situation. Maybe Americans are too sleepy at four o'clock in the morning to give a hoot what these squawky alarm clocks are shouting. But we'll tell you one thing: The rest of the world is sharply opposed to us in the *cock-a-doodle-do* department. In fact, Europe presents a more united front on roosters than on any issue since Charlemagne. Germany, Spain, and Italy are all agreed that what this bird is trying to say in *kikiriki* (kee-kee-ree-kee), *quiquiriqui*, and *chicchiricchi*, respectively. In Spanish-speaking countries, young roosters say *quiquiriqui*, but the old ones go *quiquiriq-oooo*. France deviates slightly in favor of *cocorico*; Japan votes for *kokekkoko*—all far cries from *cock-a-doodle-do*.

Most of the Western world goes along with the U. S. conviction that ducks quack. But you can't argue a Chinese out of the certainty that Cantonese ducks say *ap-ap*. Ducks in Japan go around spouting *ga-ga*; Arabic ones —*bat-bat*; Rumanian—*mac-mac*. If you should ever go duck hunting in Germany and hear a *quack-quack*, don't be too quick to shoot. In Germany, ducks go *quack-quack* all right—but so do frogs.

(Continued on page 6)

Illustrated by William Hogarth





Letter Box

What is your opinion? You write it; we'll print it. Address your letters to "Letter Box," *Literary Cavalcade*, 33 W. 42nd St., New York 36, N. Y.

Dear Editor:

I would like to say that I thoroughly enjoyed reading Cornelia Otis Skinner's "I Learn to Skate" (December L. C.). When I finished reading it, my sides ached from laughing. Please print more of her stories in the future.

Leon Morsing
Clinton (Iowa) H.S.

Dear Editor:

The article about the movie "The Telltale Heart" (December issue) was very interesting to us because it was

based on a story by Edgar Allan Poe, whom we are studying now.

We also enjoyed the Christmas story "Give the Heart."

We think *Literary Cavalcade's* a fine magazine.

Betty King
Charlotte Wilson
Rural Retreat (Va.) H. S.

Dear Editor:

In regards to the book excerpt "Your Trip Into Space," I am wondering how the second part of the flight to the moon, after the stop at the space no atmosphere to react to the thrust of the rocket ship, in my estimation, the rocket could not leave the space station.

Don Friedly
Rockford (Ohio) H.S.

(You've asked a good question, Don. In a section of the book which did not appear in *Cavalcade*, author Lynn Poole writes: "Many people want to know why rocket propulsion needs no air in order to operate. We must remember one important fact. The escaping gas does not push on or against anything behind it in order to create the for-

ward thrust. It is the force of action of the escaping gas, setting up an equal and opposite reaction which causes the forward motion of the object. (This is Newton's third law of matter: *To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.*) Since the escaping gas does not push on anything, rocket propulsion can take place in a total vacuum where there is absolutely no air. . . . This is a scientific fact, one which has been tested and proved in the laboratory."

Thanks, Mr. Poole.—Editors.)

Dear Editor:

In my opinion "Give the Heart" (December issue) is one of the best stories ever printed in *Literary Cavalcade*. The problem it involves is that of many teen-agers. The story proves that a boy doesn't have to go "head over heels" for a girl to show that he likes her. In fact, many times he can like a girl and hardly show it. A boy has other interests and so does a girl. We should not let dating interfere with our other interests. The story shows that we'll be happier if we do have other interests, just as Danny had his model airplanes.

Darlene Burchert
Milby H.S., Houston, Tex.

(Continued from preceding page)

The cats of the world present a fairly solid front. Should you, on a trip around the globe, be suddenly awakened in the middle of the night by a *meow*, it would be pretty safe to throw a shoe at the back fence. You would hit a cat. This holds true everywhere except in Arabic-speaking lands and Japan. A diplomat from the land of the Rising Sun insisted that Nipponese cats say *nyah-nyah*. In Arab territory, felines express themselves under ordinary circumstances with *nau-nau*.

The dog is supposed to be man's best friend. That's why it's so flabbergasting how people have managed to garble the message this poor animal has been trying to convey all these years. Spanish dogs, for instance, seem to have some ethnological kinship with American Indians. In their native habitat, Spanish cockers say *how-how* (*jau-jau* written in Castilian). French poodles in Alsace sit on the banks of the Rhine barking *oua-oua* (vow-vow).

It's all very well for the Schuman Plan to internationalize coal. But we suggest they get busy on the problem of standardizing the European bark. *Oua-oua* and *vau-vau*, only a mile apart

geographically, are poles apart spiritually.

As one goes progressively eastward, the ways of the dog become more and more inscrutable. The Turks are under the impression that their hounds say *hov-hov*, *hov-hov*. Nor is there any arguing with the Russians. Wolfhounds invented barking. And believe it or not, dogs in Moscow gather around the Kremlin at night and bay *vas-vas*, *vas-vas* at the moon.

It is in China, however, that the canine kingdom goes completely berserk. We checked and double-checked our information. In short, the people of China will swear on Confucius' name that their dogs say *wang-wang*, *wang-wang*. Personally, the vision of settling down in any easy chair after dinner with a pipe, slippers, and a dog at our feet who looks up and says *wang-wang* does not appeal to our sense of domesticity.

We were successful in wangling a pig sound out of the French commercial attaché and, as might be expected, it isn't *oink-oink*. It's *oueee-oueee*, which is practically pig-par for "yes-yes" in the French language. The party line for Russian hogs is *chroo-chroo* (*h'roo-h'roo*, deeply guttural).

We asked our Russian informant whether Soviet children ever sing a song entitled, *Old MacDonald Had a*

Collectivized Farm, *Ee-i, Ee-i, O*. This ditty, it appears, does not exist behind the Iron Curtain. And it's just as well, we say, for it would sound like this: "with a *vas-vas* here, a *h'roo-h'roo* there, here a *vas*, there a *vas*, everywhere a *vas-vas*."

A Whale of a Sound

We wouldn't like to conclude without mentioning one encouraging sign on the horizon that was brought to our attention by Mario Pei, famous Professor of Romance Languages at Columbia University: The Nutka Indians of Vancouver Island claim that whales say *hux* under normal conditions, and *peu-wu* when excited. Surprisingly enough, the Russian Eskimos living on the Siberian side of the Bering Strait are in perfect accord with the capitalistic Nutka tribe on this point.

From the mouth of a whale, then, comes our brightest promise of world accord. His *hux* is the only fact on earth regarding animal sounds which observers accept without a quibble. If some day we could all attune our ears to accept *hux* as belonging to a whale—and not to the otter, the sloth, or the Afghanistan loon—it might be the rallying point for a glorious era of peace on earth and good will between men and all the animals in the zoos the world over.

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Ophelia (Jean Simmons) is warned by her brother against giving her heart to Hamlet: "Perhaps he loves you . . . but his will is not his own."

Scenes from an outstanding film
that you won't want to miss

HAMLET

Shakespeare's great play about a young prince determined to avenge the murder of his father, but unable to make up his mind how to do so, was made into a breathtaking film a few years ago. If you missed it first time up—now's your chance! Sir Laurence Olivier plays the triple role of star, director, and producer. Jean Simmons is Prince Hamlet's sweetheart, Ophelia. Originally produced for J. Arthur Rank in 1948, this dramatic film version of *Hamlet* is being re-released in the U. S. by Universal-International Pictures.



"Now Hamlet, where's Polonius?" asks the king, Hamlet's step-father. Hamlet (Laurence Olivier) has just murdered the eavesdropping old Polonius—who was Ophelia's father.



"The play's the thing . . . I!" Hamlet hits upon a way to prove the king guilty of his father's murder—he'll re-enact the murder in a play.

Story by MARY RAYMOND SHIPMAN ANDREWS

Illustrated by Charles Beck

The Counsel Assigned

The life of a boy hung in the balance . . . and the career of a man on the threshold of greatness



This is a story that we think you won't forget soon. Actually, it is a story within a story. When you've finished reading it, you may be interested in this fact—history records that the young lawyer won his election.

A VERY old man told the story. Some years ago, on a night in March, he walked down the bright hallway of a hotel in Bermuda, a splendid old fellow, straight and tall; an old man of a haughty, high-bridged Roman nose, of hawklike, brilliant eyes, of a thick thatch of white hair; a distinguished person, a personage, to the least observing; not unconscious possibly, as he stalked serenely toward the office, of the eyes that followed. An American stood close as the older man lighted his cigar; a red book was in the American's hand.

"That's a pretty color," the old fellow said in the assured tone of one who had always found his smallest remarks worth while.

The American handed it to him. As he turned over the leaves he commented with the same free certainty of words, and then the two fell to talking. They strolled out on the veranda hanging over the blue waters of the bay, which rolled up unceasing music. There

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was a dance; a band played in the ballroom; girls in light dresses and officers in the scarlet jackets or the blue and gold of the British Army and navy poured past.

The old man gazed at them vaguely and smiled as one might at a field of wind-blown daisies, and talked on. He told of events, travels, adventures—experiences which had made up an important and interesting life—a life spent partly, it appeared, in the United States, partly in Canada, where he was now a member of the Parliament. His enthusiasm, it developed, was for his profession, the law. The hesitating, deep voice lost its weakness, the dark eyes flashed youthfully, as he spoke of great lawyers, of legal *esprit de corps*.

"It's nonsense"—the big, thin, scholarly fist banged the chair arm—"this theory that the law tends to make men sordid. I'm not denying that there are bad lawyers. The Lord has given into each man's hand the ultimate shaping of his career; whatever the work, he can grasp it by its bigness or its pettiness, according to his nature. Doctors look after men's bodies and parsons after their souls; there's an opinion that lawyers are created to keep an eye on the purses. But it seems to me"—the bright old eyes gazed off into the scented darkness of the southern night—"it seems to me otherwise. It seems to me that the right lawyer, with his mind trained into a clean, flexible instrument, as it should be, has his specialty in both fields. I am a very old man; I have seen

many fine deeds done on the earth, and I can say that in fact—"

The bright end of the cigar burned a red hole in the velvet darkness, the old man's Roman profile cut against the lighted window, and he was silent. He went on in his slow, authoritative voice:

"In fact, I may say that the finest deed I've known was the performance of a lawyer acting in his professional capacity."

With that he told this story:

. . .

The chairman of the county committee stopped at the open door of the office. The nominee for Congress was deep in a letter, and, unpretentious as were the ways of the man, one considered his convenience; one did not interrupt.

The chairman halted and, waiting, regarded at leisure the face frowning over the paper. A vision came to him, in a flash, of mountain cliffs he had seen—rocky, impregnable, unchangeable; seamed with lines of outer weather and inner torment; lonely and grim, yet lovely with gentle things that grow and bloom.

This man's face was like that; it stood for stern uprightness; it shifted and changed as easily as the shadows change across ferns and young birches on a crag; deep within were mines of priceless things. Not so definitely, but yet so shaped, the simile came to the chairman; he had an admiration for his Congressional candidate.

LITERARY CAVALCADE



The candidate folded the letter and put it in his pocket; he swung about in his office chair. "Sorry to keep you waiting, Tom. I was trying to figure out how a man can be in two places at once."

"If you get it, let me know," the other threw back. "We've a use for that trick right now. You're wanted to make another speech Friday night."

The big man in the chair crossed his long legs and looked at his manager meditatively. "I didn't get it quite figured," he said slowly. "That's my trouble. I can't make the speech here Friday."

"Can't make—your speech! You don't mean that. You're joking. Oh I see—of course you're joking."

The man in the chair shook his head. "Not a bit of it." He got up and began to stride about the room with long, lounging steps. The chairman, excited at the mere suggestion of failure in the much-advertised speech, flung remonstrances after him.

"Cartwright is doing too well—he's giving deuced good talks, and he's at it every minute; he might beat us yet, you know; it won't do to waste a chance—election's too near. Cartwright's swearing that you're an atheist and an aristocrat—you've got to knock that out."

The large figure stopped short, and a queer smile twisted the big mouth and shone in the keen, visionary eyes. "An atheist and an aristocrat!" he repeated. "The Lord help me!"

Then he sat down and for ten minutes talked a vivid flood of words. At the end of ten minutes the listener had no doubts as to the nominee's interest in the fight, or his power to win it. The harsh deep voice stopped: there was a pause which held, from some undercurrent of feeling, a dramatic quality.

"We'll win!" he cried. "We'll win, and without the Friday speech. I can't tell you why, Tom, and I'd rather not be asked, but I can't make that speech here Friday." The candidate had concluded—and it was concluded.

Traveling in those days was not a luxurious business. There were few railways; one drove or rode, or one walked. The candidate was poor, almost as day laborers are poor now. Friday morning at daybreak his tall figure stepped through the silent streets of the western city before the earliest risers were about. He swung along the roads, through woodland and open country, moving rapidly and with the tireless ease of strong, accustomed muscles.

He went through villages. Once a woman busy with her cows gave him a

cup of warm milk. Once he sat down on a log and ate food from a package wrapped in paper, which he took from his pocket. Except for those times he did not stop, and nine o'clock found him on the outskirts of a straggling town, twenty miles from his starting-point.

The courthouse was a wooden building with a cupola, with a front veranda of Doric pillars. The door stood wide to the summer morning. Court was already in session. The place was crowded, for there was to be a murder trial to-day. The Congressional candidate, unnoticed, stepped inside and sat by the door in the last row of seats.

It was a crude interior of white walls, of unpainted woodwork, of pine floors and wooden benches. The Franklin stove which heated it in winter stood there yet, its open mouth showing dead ashes of the last March fire; its yards of stovepipe ran a zigzag overhead.

The newcomer glanced about at this stage-setting as if familiar with the type. A larceny case was being tried. The man listened closely and seemed to study lawyers and Judge. He was interested in the comments of the people near him. The case being ended, another was called. A man was to be tried this time for assault; the stranger in the

back seat misseu no word. This case, too, came to a close. The District Attorney rose and moved the trial of John Wilson for murder.

There was a stir through the courtroom, and people turned on the hard benches and faced toward the front door, the one entrance. In the doorway appeared the Sheriff leading a childish figure, a boy of fifteen dressed in poor, home-made clothes, with a conspicuous bright head of golden hair. He was pale, desperately frightened; his eyes gazed on the floor.

Through the packed crowd the Sheriff brought this shrinking, halting creature till he stood before the Judge inside the bar. The Judge, a young man, faced the criminal, and there was a pause. It seemed to the stranger, watching from his seat by the door, that the Judge was steadying himself against a pitiful sight.

At length: "Have you counsel?" the Judge demanded.

A SHUDDER shook the slim shoulders; there was no other answer.

The Judge repeated the question, in no unkind manner. "Have you a lawyer?" he asked.

The lad's lips moved a minute before one heard anything; then he brought out, "I dunno—what that is."

"A lawyer is a man to see that you get your rights. Have you a lawyer?"

The lad shook his unkempt yellow head. "No. I dunno—anybody—I hain't got—money—to pay."

"Do you wish the court to assign you counsel?" He was unconscious that the familiar technical terms were an unknown tongue to the lad gasping before him. With that, through the stillness came a sound of a boot that scraped the floor. The man in the back seat rose, slouched forward, stood before the Judge.

"May it please your Honor," he said, "I am a lawyer. I should be glad to act as counsel for the defense."

The Judge looked at him a moment; there was something uncommon in this loose-hung figure towering inches above six feet; there was power. The Judge looked at him. "What is your name?" he asked.

The man answered quietly: "Abraham Lincoln."

A few men here and there glanced at the big lawyer again; this was the person who was running for Congress. That was all. A tall, gaunt man in common clothes gave his name. Frontier farmers and backwoodsmen in homespun jeans, some of them with buckskin breeches, most in their shirt-sleeves, women in calico and sunbon-

nets, sat about and listened. Nobody saw more. Nobody dreamed that the name spoken and heard was to fill one of the great places in history.

The Judge, who had lived in large towns and learned to classify humanity a bit, alone placed the lawyer as outside the endless procession of the average. Moreover, he had heard of him. "I know your name, Mr. Lincoln; I shall be glad to assign you to defend the prisoner," he answered.

The jury was drawn. Man after man, giving his name, and, being questioned by the District Attorney, came under the scrutiny of the deep eyes under the overhanging brows—eyes keen, dreamy, sad, humorous. Man after man, those eyes of Lincoln's sought out the character of each. But he challenged no one.

The District Attorney examined each. The lawyer for the defense examined none; he accepted them all. The hard-faced audience began to glance at him impatiently. The feeling was against the prisoner, yet they wished to see some fight made for him; they wanted a play of swords. There was no excitement in looking at a giant who sat still in his chair.

The District Attorney opened the case for the People. He told with few words the story of the murder. The prisoner had worked on the farm of one Amos Berry in the autumn before, in 1845. On this farm was an Irishman, Shaughnessy by name. He amused himself by worrying the boy, and the boy came to hate him. The boy kept out of his way, yet the older man continued to worry him.

On the 28th of October the boy was to drive a wagon of hay to the next farm. At the gate of the barnyard he met Shaughnessy with Berry and two other men. The boy asked Berry to open the gate, and Berry was about to do it when Shaughnessy spoke. The boy was lazy he said—let him get down and open the gate himself. Berry hesitated, laughing at Shaughnessy, and the Irishman caught the pitchfork, which the lad held and pricked him with it and ordered him to get down. The lad sprang forward, and snatching back the pitchfork, flew at the Irishman and ran one of the prongs into his skull. The man died in an hour. The boy had been thrown into jail and had lain there nine months awaiting trial. This was the story.

By now it was the dinner hour—twelve o'clock. The court adjourned and the Judge and the lawyers went across the street to the tavern, a two-story house with long verandas; the audience scattered to be fed, many dining on the grass from lunches

brought with them, for a murder trial is a gala day in the backwoods, and people make long journeys to see the show.

One lawyer was missing at the tavern. The Judge and the attorneys wondered where he was, for though this was not the eighth circuit, where Abraham Lincoln practiced, yet his name was known here. Lawyers of the eighth circuit had talked about his gift of story telling; these men wanted to hear him tell stories.

But the big man had disappeared and nobody had been interested enough to notice as he passed down the shady street with a very little, faded woman in shabby clothes; a woman who had sat in a dark corner of the courtroom crying silently, who had stolen forward and spoken a timid word to Lincoln. With her he turned into one of the poorest houses of the town and had dinner with her and her cousin, the carpenter, and his family.

"That's the prisoner's mother," a woman whispered when, an hour later, court opened again, and the defendant's lawyer came up the steps with the forlorn little woman and seated her very carefully before he went forward to his place.

The District Attorney, in his shirt sleeves, in a chair tipped against the wall, called and examined witnesses. Proof was made of the location; the place was described; eye-witnesses testified to the details of the crime. There appeared to be no possible doubt of the criminal's guilt.

THE lad sat huddled, colorless from his months in jail, sunk now in an apathy—a murderer at fifteen. Men on the jury who had hardy, honest boys of their own at home frowned at him, and more than one, it may be, considered that a monster of this sort would be well removed. Back in her dark corner the shabby woman sat quiet.

The sultry afternoon wore on. Outside the open windows a puff of wind moved branches of trees now and then, but hardly a breath came inside; it was hot, wearisome, but yet the crowd stayed. These were people who had no theatres; it was a play to listen to the District Attorney drawing from one witness after another the record of humiliation and rage, culminating in murder. It was excitement to watch the yellow-haired child on trial for his life. It was an added thrill for those who knew the significance of her presence, to turn and stare at the thin woman cowering in her seat, shaking with that continual repressed crying.

All this was too good to lose, so the



crowd stayed. Ignorant people are probably not wilfully cruel; probably they like to watch suffering as a small boy watches the animal he tortures—from curiosity, without a sense of its reality. The poor are notoriously kind to each other; yet it is the poor, the masses, who throng the murder trials and executions.

The afternoon wore on. The District Attorney's nasal voice rose and fell, examining witnesses. But the big lawyer sitting there did not satisfy people. He did not cross-examine one witness, he did not make one objection even to statements very damaging to his client.

He scrutinized the Judge and the jury. One might have said that he was studying the character of each man; till at length the afternoon had worn to an end, and the District Attorney had examined the last witness and had risen and said: "The People rest." That side of the case was finished, and court adjourned for supper, to reopen at 7:30 in the evening.

BEFORE the hour the audience had gathered. It was commonly said that the boy was doomed; no lawyer, even a "smart" man, could get him off after such testimony, and the current opinion was that the big hulking fellow could not be a good lawyer or he would have put a spoke in the wheel for his client before this. The sentiment ran in favor of condemnation, to have killed a man at fifteen showed depravity which was best put out of the way. Stern, narrow—the hard-living men and women of the backwoods set their thin lips into this sentence; yet down inside each one beat a heart capable of generous warmth if only the way to it were found, if a finger with a sure touch might be laid on the sealed gentleness.

Court opened. Not a seat was empty. The small woman in her worn calico dress sat forward this time, close to the bar. A few feet separated her from her son. The lawyers took their places. The Sheriff had brought in the criminal. The Judge entered. And then Abraham

Lincoln stalked slowly up through the silent benches, and paused as he came to the prisoner. He laid a big hand on the thin shoulder, and the lad started nervously. Lincoln bent from his great height.

"Don't you be scared, sonny," he said quietly, but yet everyone heard every word. "I'm going to pull you out of this hole. Try to be plucky for your mother's sake."

And the boy lifted his blue young eyes for the first time and glanced over to the shabby woman, and she met his look with a difficult smile, and he tried to smile back. The audience saw the effort of each for the other; the Judge saw it; and the jury—and Lincoln's keen eyes, watching ever under the heavy brows, caught a spasm of pity in more than one face. He took off his coat and folded it on the back of his chair and stood in his shirt sleeves. He stood, a man of the people in look and manner. A comfortable sense pervaded the spectators that what he was going to say they were going to understand. The room was still.

"Gentlemen of the Jury," began Abraham Lincoln, standing in his shirt sleeves before the court, "I am going to try this case in a manner not customary in courts. I am not going to venture to cross the tracks of the gentleman who has tried it for the prosecution. I shall not call witnesses; the little prisoner over there is all the witness I want. I shall not argue; I shall beseech you to make the argument for yourselves. All I'm going to do is to tell you a story and show you how it connects with this case, and then leave the case in your hands."

There was a stir through the courtroom. The voice, rasping, unpleasant at first, went on:

"You, Jim Beck—you, Jack Armstrong—"

People jumped; these were the names of neighbors and friends which this stranger used. His huge knotted forefinger singled out two in the jury.

"You two can remember—yes, and you as well, Luke Green—fifteen years

back, in 1831, when a long, lank fellow in God-forsaken clothes came into this country from Indiana. His appearance, I dare to say, was so striking that those who saw him haven't forgotten him. He was dressed in blue homespun jeans. His feet were in rawhide boots, and the breeches were stuffed into the tops of them most of the time. He had a soft hat which had started life as black, but had sunburned till it was a combine of colors. Gentlemen of the Jury, I think some of you will remember those clothes and that young man. His name was Abraham Lincoln."

THE gaunt speaker paused and pushed up his sleeves a bit, and the jurymen saw the hairy wrists and the muscles of hand and forearm. Yes, they remembered the young giant who had been champion in everything that meant physical strength. They sat tense.

"The better part of a man's life consists of his friendships," the strong voice went on, and the eyes softened as it looking back over a long road traveled. "There are good friends to be found in these parts; that young fellow in blue jeans had a few. It is about a family who befriended him that I am going to tell you. The boy Abraham Lincoln left his father, who was, as all know, a man in the humblest walk of life, and at twenty-two he undertook to shift for himself.

"There were pretty pinching times along then, and Abraham could not always get work. One fall afternoon, when he had been walking miles on a journey westward to look for a chance, it grew late, and he realized suddenly that unless he should run across a house he would have to sleep out. With that he heard an axe ring and came upon a cabin. It was a poor cabin even as settlers' cabins go. There was cloth over the window instead of glass; there was only one room, and a little window above which told of a loft.

"Abraham strode on to the cabin hopefully. The owner, a strong fellow with yellow hair, came up, axe in hand, and of him the young man asked shelter." Again the voice paused and a smile of a pleasant memory flashed.

"Gentlemen of the Jury, no king ever met a fellow-monarch with a finer welcome. Everything he had, the wood-chopper told Abraham, was his. The man brought the tired boy inside. The door was only five feet high and the young fellow had to stoop some to get in. Two children of five or six were playing, and a little woman was singing the baby to sleep. The visitor climbed up a ladder to the loft after supper.

"He crawled down next morning, and when he had done a few chores to help, he bethought himself to take advice from the woodchopper. He asked if there were jobs to be got. The man said yes; if he could chop and split rails there was enough to do. Now Abraham had had an axe put into his hands at eight years, and had dropped it since only long enough to eat meals. 'I can do that,' he said.

"Do you like to work?" the woodsman asked.

"Abraham had to tell him that he wasn't a hand to pitch into work like killing snakes, but yet—well, the outcome of it was that he stayed and proved that he could do a man's job."

A WHISPERED word ran from one to another on the benches—they began to remember now the youngster who could outlift, outwork and outwrestle any man in the county. The big lawyer saw, and a gleam of gratification flashed; he was proud always of his physical strength. He went on:

"For five weeks Abraham lived in the cabin. The family character became as familiar to him as his own. He chopped with the father, did housework with the mother, and tended Sonny, the baby, many a time. To this day the man has a clear memory of that golden-haired baby laughing as the big lad rolled him about the uneven floor. He came to know the stock, root and branch, and can vouch for it.

"When he went away they refused to take money. No part of his life has ever been more light-hearted or happier. Does anybody here think that any sacrifice which Abraham Lincoln could make in after life would be too great to show his gratitude to those people?"

He shot the question at the jury, at the Judge, and, turning, brought the crowded courtroom into its range. A dramatic silence answered.

The tiny woman's dim eyes stared at him, dilated. The boy's bright, sunken head had lifted a little and his thin fingers had caught at a chair at arm's length, and clutched it.

The lawyer picked up his coat from where he had laid it, and, while every eye in the courtroom watched him, he fumbled in a pocket, unhurried, and brought out a bit of letter-paper. Holding it, he spoke again:

"The young man who had come under so large a weight of obligation prospered in later life. By hard work, by good fortune, by the blessing of God, he made for himself a certain place in the community. As much as might be, he has—I have—kept in touch with those old friends. Yet in the stress

About the Author

Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews grew up in the state in which Lincoln was born. She was a school girl in Lexington, Kentucky, in the years right after the Civil War—and right after Lincoln's assassination—when his name was on many people's lips. She is perhaps best known for her story of the Gettysburg Address, *The Perfect Tribute*. She died in 1936.

And while Lincoln is uppermost in your minds, how about turning to page 27. You'll find a poem there that we think you'll enjoy.

~~~~~  
of a very busy life I have not of late years heard from them. Till last Monday morning this—he held up the letter—"this came to me in Springfield. It is a letter from the mother who sat by the fire in that humble cabin and gave a greeting to the wandering, obscure youth which Abraham Lincoln, please God, will not forget—not in this world, not when the hand of death has set his soul free of another. The woodsman died years ago, the two older children followed him. The mother who sang to her baby that afternoon—he swept about and his long arm and knotted finger pointed, as he towered above the courtroom, to the meek, small woman shrinking on the front seat—"the mother is there."

The arm dropped; his luminous eyes shone on the boy criminal's drooping golden head; in the court-room there was no one who did not hear each low syllable of the sentence which followed.

"The baby is the prisoner at the bar."

In the hot crowded place one caught a gasp from back by the door; one heard a woman's dress rustle, and a man clear his throat—and that was all.

There was silence, and the counsel for the defense let it alone to do his work. From the figure which loomed above the rude company virtue went out and worked a magic.

The silence which stretched from the falling of Lincoln's voice; the silence which he let stretch on—and on; which he held to its insistent witchcraft when every soul in the court-room began to feel it as personally harassing; this long silence shaped the minds before him as words could not. Lincoln held the throng facing their own thoughts, facing the story he had told, till all over the room men and women were shuffling, sighing, distressed with the push and the ferment of that silence.

**A**T the crucial moment the frayed ends of the nerves of the audience were gathered up as the driver of a four-in-hand gathers up the reins of his frac-

tious horses. The voice of the defendant's lawyer sounded over the throng.

"Many times, as I have lain wakeful in the night," he spoke as if reflecting aloud, "many times I have remembered those weeks of unfailing kindness from those poor people, and have prayed God to give me a chance to show my gratefulness. When the letter came last Monday calling for help, I knew that God had answered. An answer to prayer comes sometimes with a demand for sacrifice. It was so. The culminating moment of years of ambition for me was to have been tonight. I was to have made tonight a speech which bore, it is likely, success or failure in a contest. I lay that ambition, that failure, if the event so prove it, gladly on the altar of this boy's safety.

"It is for you"—his strong glance swept the jury—"to give him that safety. Gentlemen of the Jury, I said when I began that I should try this case in a manner not customary. I said I had no argument to set before you. I believe, as you are all men with human hearts, as some of you are fathers with little fellows of your own at home—I believe that you need no argument. I have told the story; you know the stock of which the lad comes; you know that at an age when his hands should have held school-books or fishing-rod, they held—because he was working for his mother—the man's tool which was his undoing; you know how the child was goaded by a grown man till in desperation he used that tool at hand. You know these things as well as I do. All I ask is that you deal with the little fellow as you would have other men deal in such a case with those little fellows at home. I trust his life to that test. Gentlemen of the Jury, I rest my case."

And Abraham Lincoln sat down.

**A**LITTLE later, when the time came, the jury filed out and crossed to a room in the hotel opposite. The boy stayed. Some of the lawyers went to the hotel, some stood about on the ground under the trees; but many stayed in the courtroom, and all were waiting, watching for a sound from the man shut up across the way.

Then, half an hour had passed, and there was a bustle, and people who had gone out crowded back. The worn small woman in the front row clasped her thin hands tight together.

The jury filed in and sat down on the shaky benches, and answered as their names were called, and rose and stood.

"Gentlemen of the Jury," the clerk's voice spoke monotonously, "have you agreed upon a verdict?"

"We have," the foreman answered

famly, woodenly, and the men and women thrilled at the conventional two syllables. They meant life or death, those two syllables.

"What is your verdict, guilty or not guilty?"

For a second, perhaps, no one breathed in all that packed mass. The small woman glared palely at the foreman; every eye watched him. Did he hesitate? Only the boy, sitting with his golden head down, seemed not to listen.

"Not guilty," said the foreman.

With that there was pandemonium. Men shouted, stamped, waved, tossed up their hats; women sobbed; one or two screamed with wild joy. Abraham Lincoln saw the slim body of the prisoner fall forward; with two strides he had caught him up in his great arms, and, lifting him like a baby, passed him across the bar into the arms, into the lap, of the woman who caught him, rocked him, kissed him. They all saw that, and with instinctive, unthinking sympathy the whole room surged toward her; but Lincoln stood guard and pushed off the crowd.

"The boy's fainted," he said loudly. "Give him air." And then with a smile that beamed over each one of them there, "She's got her baby—it's all right, friends. But somebody bring a drink of water for Sonny."

• • •

The American, holding a cigar that had gone out, was silent. The old man spoke again, as if vindicating himself, as if answering objections from the other.

"Of course such a thing could not happen to-day," he said. "It could not have happened then in eastern courts. Only a Lincoln could have carried it off anywhere, it may be. But he knew his audience and the jury, and his genius measured the character of the Judge. It happened. It is a fact."

The American drew a long breath. "I have not doubted you, sir," he said. "I could not speak because—because your story touched me. Lincoln is our hero. It goes deep to hear of a thing like that."

He hesitated and glanced curiously at the old man. "May I ask how you came by the story? You told it with a touch of—intimacy—almost as if you had been there. Is it possible that you were in that courtroom?"

The bright, dark eyes of the very old man flashed hawklike as he turned his aquiline, keen face toward the questioner; he smiled with an odd expression, only partly as if at the stalwart, up-to-date American before him, more as if smiling back half a century to faces long ago dust.

"I was the Judge," he said.

## Tarzan Scares Soviet Farm Animals

Snapshots from the press

*If the farms of Russia don't produce their quotas this year, the Soviet moguls have their culprit all picked out—Tarzan. Four old Tarzan movies were "confiscated" by the Russians as war booty in Berlin. These films have been shown in Russian movie theatres until they are practically threadbare. Special movie trucks take them into farm areas for showing.*

*What about the poor farm animals? Left in the cold where they can hear Tarzan's shrieks but can't see his histrionics, the chickens and pigs are in an uproar. So is Pravda. Faced by the quacks, squeals, and neighs of these dissatisfied Soviet workers, Pravda, the official paper of the Russian Communist party, has declared that something must be done!*

### Pravda Scolds at Tarzan Films

Moscow, Dec. 27 (AP)—Pravda has blasted Soviet movie distributors for sending out old American pictures featuring Tarzan, whose jungle roars are scaring the chickens and pigs on collective farms.

The official newspapers of the Russian Communist party demanded that Soviet peasants, instead of being required to watch "trashy" stuff like Tarzan pictures and American cowboy and pirate films, be shown serious films about Russian scientists, doctors and teachers.

"Tarzan travels from village to village, from settlement to settlement, from town to town on his 1½-ton truck," Pravda said. "His wild shriek is even heard this month in Voronezh (290 miles southeast of Moscow). His visits are planned weeks ahead of time. From the continuous screaming and shooting chickens are awakened from their sleep and panic is caused among the livestock in the barns and villages at night."

Pravda demanded that the district and regional Communist party cultural departments give the peasants more culture, if less excitement, and the pigs and chickens more restful nights.

The paper gave this description of events in the village of Kuzikha when the Tarzan film truck arrived:

"Soon the livestock section of the farm was filled with the sound of war cries of African tribal hunters, the



deafening beats of tom-toms," Pravda said. "Then a wild lion appeared on the screen, and such a deafening roar was heard that the spectators became frightened. And then the farm animals set up a squealing and howling that almost drowned out the sounds from the screen—where Tarzan fought a death struggle with the lion and killed him, without getting a single scratch on his own naked body."

"But though the lion was dead, the screeching continued—on the screen and off. As the ape Cheetaah danced and screamed on the screen, the livestock howled in the barns."

"At this, the farmers, having recovered from their own fright, had a good laugh."

Pravda pinned the blame for the situation on Kino Prokat, Soviet film distribution organization, which, it said, replaced the Tarzan films, after they had run out, with "the deafening shooting of cowboys or sea pirates."

(When the news stories of Pravda's struggles with Tarzan appeared in U. S. papers, one newspaper made this tongue-in-cheek comment.)

### Tarzan in Muscovy

Editorial in the N. Y. Herald Tribune

The adventures of Tarzan in the land of Muscovy will surely rank with his most bizarre experiences. Without half trying, the King of the Apes has thrown the entire barnyard population of the Soviet Union into an uproar.

The Russian peasants, as distinguished from the livestock, seemingly enjoy Tarzan pictures as much as the peasants of other lands. But the chicken-hearted movie critics of Pravda say the animals come first. Doubtless they will try to ban the pictures from Russia so that the pigs and chickens will get the sleep they need for the hard day's work ahead of them. But the task won't be as easy as Pravda thinks, for, as every moviegoer knows, Tarzan invariably triumphs over all. This time Malenkov may have met his match.





"Your trombone . . . here it is," grins a pawn shop owner as struggling young musician Glenn Miller (*James Stewart*) enters his shop. Glenn takes his horn out of hock whenever he lands a job. He has a new band job now.



Glenn makes a date with his girl for "right after work." When he arrives at 2 a.m. (after the band concert), Helen (*June Allyson*) has given him up, gone to bed. The "date" takes place on the porch.



Glenn's dream has always been to form a band with a "sound of its own." Finally he gets a band—but during rehearsal for opening night his trumpet player cuts his lip, drops out.

To keep the band's engagement, Glenn rewrites his arrangements with a clarinet lead. On the opening night he and Helen (now Mrs. Miller) realize that he has found "the sound."







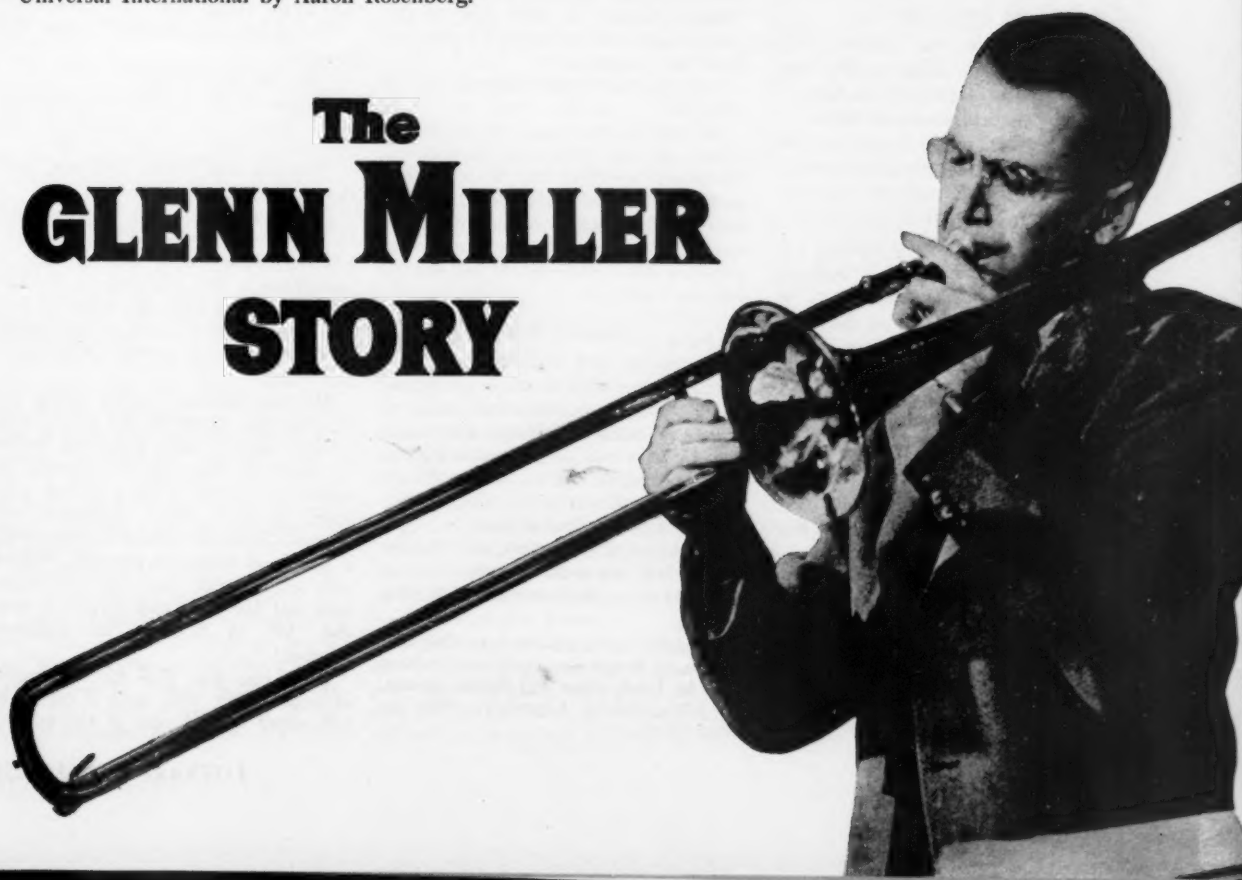
"Basin Street Blues": an impromptu jam session in New York spotlights Louis Armstrong, above, and also Gene Krupa (each playing himself).



When Glenn's meteoric success is interrupted by World War II, he takes his band overseas. The band is assembled in Paris, Dec., 1944, for a Christmas broadcast when word comes of Glenn's plane crash. The broadcast goes on—with music that will live for many years.

● On these pages we present scenes from a new film based on the life of a well-known band leader. *The Glenn Miller Story* is the story of a young man who had a dream—a dream to form a band with a new and distinct sound of its own. The now-famous Miller recordings of *In the Mood*, *Moonlight Serenade*, *String of Pearls*, *Little Brown Jug*, and many other all-time favorites testify to the accomplishment of this musical goal. The outstanding Technicolor film which records the story has been produced for Universal International by Aaron Rosenberg.

# The GLENN MILLER STORY



*With a line of talk and a length of rope,  
he shuffled his way into the heart of a nation*

# Our Will Rogers

By HOMER CROY

About this piece: Will Rogers was a rope-swinging cowboy from Oklahoma—part Indian, part Irish. On stage, in his syndicated newspaper comments, in his movies, in his radio appearances, he shared with millions of people his humorous, kindly, and often profound outlook on life. He made people laugh—and more than that, he made them think.

In 1935, Will Rogers died in a plane crash in Alaska. But he has not been forgotten by the Americans who laughed at his wit and felt the wisdom of his homespun truths. His place in American legend today is as secure as his place in the hearts of those who remember him.

His real name was Colonel William Penn Adair Rogers. He was born in Indian Territory on Nov. 4, 1879. As one who knew him remembers, "He made much in his later years of having made his first appearance in the world on Election Day. He had more Irish than Indian blood, but always emphasized the Indian. When he spoke in Symphony Hall to the aristocrats of Boston, he said that he was pleased to meet the descendants of the Mayflower. Then, with his perfect sense of timing, he hesitated and added that his ancestors had not come over in this fashion but they had met the boat. . . . Actually, he was neither simple nor ignorant. The heart of what he preached is still as true as it was 20 years ago."

On these pages we present an excerpt from a recent book of the life of Will Rogers, an excerpt that gives us a friendly backstage glimpse of the comedian on his amazing climb to a top notch in the affections of so many Americans.

SUNDAY, June 11, 1905, a few people were drowsing in the audience of Keith's Union Square Theatre in New York City when a cowboy shuffled out on the stage, saying not a word at all; coils of rope dangled from his hand. He tossed the rope here and there and hopped through a loop or two, as silent as a giraffe.

Then suddenly from the wings a horse darted out, a rider on his back. The cowboy threw his rope and caught the horse—probably the first time a running horse was ever roped on the stage in the history of the world.

The manager of the theater was impressed; usually a manager would not be impressed by a collision of the moon and Mars, but this one was. He said, "Well, it wasn't so bad; some of the people appeared to like it. I'll put you on all day tomorrow."

Will Rogers' heart fluttered like a daffodil.

He was on the stage. Or really the horse was and Will was his support. Everybody watched the horse. Would he fall? Would he dodge the rope? The novelty of having a running horse on the stage was exciting. Now and then someone asked who was the boy throwing the rope?

## Watch This!

During the act Will didn't utter a peep. He had worked out an additional fillip: this was to throw two ropes at once and catch both horse and rider, as difficult a trick as you can scare up. But the audience didn't pay much attention to it. It was just a fellow throwing two ropes instead of one.

Then one of the actors said that he should tell the audience what he was going to do so they would watch with

added interest. The next time, Will stopped the act, stepped forward, and spoke to the audience: "Folks, I'm goin' to call your attention to something in this act worth lookin' at, and that's to ketch both horse and rider at one an' the same time. . . . If this thing comes off, it'll be quite a trick; if it doesn't, you better all go home."

He meant it as a straight announcement and never dreamed there was an element of humor in it. But with his personality added, it made the audience laugh. Will was flabbergasted. They were not taking him seriously; they didn't appreciate the trick. He went through the roping depressed. Next time he wouldn't say a word.

When Will came off, one of the actors in the wings said, "That was fine."

"What was fine about it?" asked Will moodily.

"Making them laugh."

"There wasn't anything to laugh at. They laughed at me instead of appreciatin' what I was tryin' to do."

"You get every laugh you can," said the old and experienced actor.

If laughs were what they wanted, he'd give 'em plenty. A bit to his astonishment, Will found that he was a comedian; it was exhilarating. He had always liked to have fun when he was in a crowd and to make people laugh; and here he was getting paid for it. Not bad.

He was nervous before going on. He told this to one of the actors, who advised him to chew gum just before he went on. One day, by chance, he came out on the stage with the gum hard at work. The audience was amused. When he missed his rope trick a couple of times, he stopped, walked over to the sign that had his name, took out his gum, and spread it over the "W" in WILL. The audience laughed.

Then one day Will told a theatre manager, "My wife says I ought to talk about what I read in the papers.

Reprinted by permission from *Our Will Rogers*, by Homer Croy, published in New York by Duell, Sloan and Pearce; Boston, by Little, Brown. Copyright, 1953, by Homer Croy.

She says I'm always readin' the papers, so why not pass along what I read?"

That very night Will began to talk about what he had seen in the papers. The audience liked it and so did the people backstage.

What was funny and what wasn't? What did audiences laugh at? Will began to see that it was truth that appealed to them—salted with exaggeration. So he tried to arrive at the basic truth in a situation, then exaggerate it until the audience laughed. He liked the people in the audience to nod approval, or to nudge their friends and say, "He's right." It was the humor of truth.

His greatest—his biggest—his most outstanding triumph was when his show played in Baltimore and President Woodrow Wilson came from Washington to see it—the first time in theatrical history that a President had gone away from Washington to see a comedy. Did he dare joke with the President of the United States? Will knew that if the President disapproved of what Will said the audience would, too, and frowns would be his mantle.

He talked about current matters for a few minutes. Then Will moved on to the Administration and discharged a couple of fire arrows. The President beamed. And then—no doubt holding his breath—Will spoke directly of President Wilson, and sent a joke wreathing toward him. President Wilson laughed aloud and so, in a moment, did the audience.

What kind of joke did he use? This is an example. The war with Germany was on, although the Allies were not in it. Said Will, his rope and gum going: "I see by the papers that them German submarines can't operate in the warm Gulf Stream. If we can only heat the ocean, then we've got 'em licked." The audience laughed, then he added seemingly casually, "Of course, that's only a rough idea. I ain't got the thing worked out yet." There was a rewarding laugh.

He was learning the skills of his trade. One rule was: when an audience is not interested in the subject, drop it and take up something else. Usually Will started his rope going. After a few whirls he would attack another subject. If this went well, he would continue until he had used up his material.

Sometimes ideas came to him on the stage; often these were the best of all. He never gave two performances that were alike. When he stepped out in front of an audience, he didn't know exactly what he was going to say. He would add or drop according to the way an audience responded. No other



Will Rogers

performer in vaudeville, or in musical comedy, was doing this. The material of most performers did not vary an eyeflick from night to night.

### Cowboy at Heart

Will's star was rising, and now reporters were coming around. This was a new problem for him. How should he handle them? Most comedians told the reporters funny stories. But Will had no interest in the so-called "funny" story. So he talked about himself and his experiences. There was glamour in the facts: he had come from Oklahoma and was part Indian, and had been a gaucho in South America, and had been a roper in an American Wild West show in South Africa. He made good copy by just talking about himself.

Will's unorthodox style offended some. One day at a lecture, a woman rose and said she had been reading what he had been writing, and asserted that he would do better if he followed the laws of syntax. He was flabbergasted for a moment. But he was rarely buried so deep he couldn't get out.

"Syntax?" he repeated, trying to think his way through a word which plainly was a stranger. "It must be bad, havin' both sin and tax in it."

The woman persisted. "It means bad grammar and that's what you employ."

"I don't do it on purpose, ma'am," he said earnestly. "I write like I talk and if I use bad grammar, it's because I don't know any better."

Will was often sensitive to criticism. In Boston, a critic said his diction was poor and his jokes worse and added that he did not come up to the standard set in Symphony Hall. Will was

hurt. In his Sunday article, he wrote:

"Last week, I was away up in Boston. Can you imagine me appearing in Symphony Hall? From the Stock Yards of Claremore, Oklahoma, to Symphony Hall, Boston. We had had 75 nights all over the country and everybody had been wonderful to us. Well, this old soul is a Musical Critic. His name is Parker. Having a trained musical ear, he thought my High Register was on the bum and my Low Registered Notes had no roundness to them. . . . It was like sending an artist to look at a Rembrandt, then at the last moment asking him to stop on the way back and look at Farmer Jones' yearlings and tell how much they were worth. . . ."

### Barnstorming Days

When he would get to the town for a lecture, he would go to see some person he knew. If he didn't know anybody, he would go to the newspaper office and get what he called "the dope." He would ask about the paving, street lights, traffic, the city council, the police, the bond issue. "I hear you got a train that runs down the middle of the street and never whistles during the day when there are people to be run over, but whistles at night when everybody is in bed."

He disobeyed all rules of lecturing. He would walk up and down the platform, lean on the piano, or sit on the piano stool. At the end, if the lecture had gone well, he would come to the edge of the platform, sit down and dangle his legs over. By this time he would have the audience so completely under his spell that he could have hopped across the stage on one foot and the audience would have liked it.

He had a strange interest in epitaphs. It was his way of taking out the sting from his remarks. One epitaph had surprising results: "I've got my epitaph all worked out. When I'm tucked away in the old graveyard, I hope they will cut this epitaph—or whatever you call them signs they put over gravestones—on it: 'Here lies Will Rogers. He joked about every prominent man in his time, but he never met a man he didn't like.' I'm so proud of that, I can hardly wait till I die so it can be carved and when you come around to my grave, you'll probably find me sittin' there, proudly readin' it."

The story of his remark appeared in the *Boston Globe*, June 16, 1930. It was the shot heard around the world. It was taken up by the Associated Press and spread far and wide. This line endeared him to the public more than any one thing that had ever come into his life.

# Be My Valentine

## Poor Timing By Phyllis McGinley

I sing of Saint Valentine, his day,  
I spread abroad his rumor—  
A gentleman, it's safe to say,  
Who owned a sense of humor.  
Most practical of jokers, he,  
Who bade sweethearts make merry  
With flowers and birds and amorous words,  
In the month of February.  
The antic, frantic,  
Unromantic  
Middle of February.

Now, April weather's fine and fair  
For love to get a start in.  
And May abets a willing pair,  
And June you lose your heart in.  
There's many a month when wooing seems  
Both suitable and proper.  
But the mating call unseasonal  
Is bound to come a cropper.

When blizzards rage with might and main  
And a man's best friend's his muffler,  
Pity the February swain,  
That sentimental snuffler,  
Whose soul must surge, whose pulse must throb  
With passionate cadenza,  
When he yearns instead for a cozy bed  
Alone with influenza.

When winds blow up and snow comes down  
And the whole gray world seems horridier,  
And every lass that sulks in town  
Thinks wistfully of Florider,  
Pity the chapped and wintry maid  
Who'd trade the arms that clasp her in,  
For Vitamin A and a nasal spray  
And maybe a bottle of aspirin.

Who wants to bill, who cares to coo,  
Who longs for cherry-chopping,  
When noses are red and fingers blue  
And the hemoglobin's dropping?  
Let summer lovers droop and pine,  
Let springtime hearts be airy.  
I wouldn't be anyone's Valentine  
In the month of February,  
The spare-able, terrible,  
Quite unbearable  
Middle of February.

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## A Valentine By Eugene Field

Go, Cupid, and my sweetheart tell  
I love her well.  
Yes, though she tramples on my heart  
And rends that bleeding thing apart;  
And though she rolls a scornful eye  
On doting me when I go by;  
And though she scouts at everything  
As tribute unto her I bring—  
Apple, banana, caramel—  
Haste, Cupid, to my love and tell,  
In spite of all, I love her well!

## To You, One and All

Now that you've scanned all our verse,  
Both long and terse,  
May we, dear readers, add four lines,  
And ask you to be our Valentines?

—The Editors



# Caval QUIZ

• Test Yourself on This Issue of Literary Cavalcade

Reading Comprehension Quizzes • Topics for Composition and Discussion

Vocabulary Building • Evaluating Standards and Ideas • Literary Appreciation • Crossword Puzzle

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS \_\_\_\_\_ FEBRUARY, 1954

## Focus on Reading

### The Counsel Assigned (p. 8)

#### I. Quick Quiz

A. Write opposite each quotation the name of the person from the list below whom the quotation describes. Count 4 points for each. Total: 16.

|             |                 |
|-------------|-----------------|
| The Judge   | John Wilson     |
| Mrs. Wilson | Abraham Lincoln |

1. "a boy of fifteen . . . with a conspicuous bright head of golden hair" \_\_\_\_\_
2. "a splendid old fellow, straight and tall . . . a distinguished person" \_\_\_\_\_
3. "a tall, gaunt man, in common clothes" \_\_\_\_\_
4. "a very little, faded woman in shabby clothes" \_\_\_\_\_

My score \_\_\_\_\_

B. Check the phrase which best completes each of the following sentences. Count 5 points for each. Total: 30.

1. The defendant, John Wilson, had killed  
☐ a. his employer, Berry.  
☐ b. a fellow worker, Shaughnessy.
2. At the time of the trial, Abraham Lincoln was  
☐ a. running for election as a Congressman.  
☐ b. President of the United States.
3. Abraham Lincoln was interested in this murder case because  
☐ a. he knew that the boy was innocent.  
☐ b. of his friendship for the parents, and his natural instinct to champion the oppressed.
4. Lincoln pleaded for the boy on the basis of  
☐ a. denial of the boy's part in the murder.  
☐ b. his youth, good family background, hardships of his life, the extent of his provocation to kill.
5. Wilson had spent the nine months since the murder  
☐ a. in jail.  
☐ b. at home, with his mother.
6. The story of John Wilson's trial was told by  
☐ a. a descendant of John Wilson.  
☐ b. the judge who had presided at the trial.

My score \_\_\_\_\_

#### II. What Do You Think?

Could this story have taken place today? Would it be true today, as in Lincoln's time, that a fifteen-year-old boy would be tried in the same way as an adult defendant? Was Lincoln justifying the murder—or attempting to explain the boy's action? Conceding that it would have been just in one sense that the boy should have paid for his crime, for what greater justice was Lincoln pleading when he defended the boy? Did you think that the jury's acquittal of the boy was just, under the circumstances? Or did you feel that he got off too easily? Explain.

### Five Minutes to Die (p. 23)

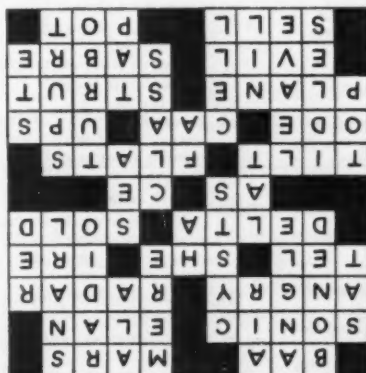
#### I. Quick Quiz

Match the letters of the names of the characters listed below, with the statements that apply to them. Write X before the one statement that does not apply to any of the characters. Count 3 points for each. Total: 24.

- |               |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| a. Dix Wilson | c. Teddy      | e. Mr. Austin |
| b. Julia      | d. Mr. Spicer | f. Emily      |
- g. George, Bob, Don, and the other high school students
- 1. He was not an unjust man, but his emotions almost overruled his better judgment.
  - 2. He pleaded any man's right to a fair trial.
  - 3. She was young, impetuous, and used to getting what she wanted.
  - 4. He did not mean to shoot the girl, but did so when he lost his temper.
  - 5. They lost their individual consciences in a surge of mob psychology.

### Crossword Puzzle Answer

Sure you can turn this upside down if you want to. But why peek and spoil your fun? Puzzle is on page 20 of Cavalcade.



- 6. He recovered his faith in himself with the help of the "Midnight Gal"; and for him, to recover his faith was to find again the talent he thought he had lost.
- 7. For her, love, faith, and understanding were all one.
- 8. He was a devoted friend as well as an agent.

My score \_\_\_\_\_

## II. What Do You Think?

Why did the students "gang up" on Dix Wilson? Have you ever known of a situation where a group became a mob?

Have you ever found yourself in a situation where appearances were against you—but where these appearances were entirely misleading? What is meant by "circumstantial evidence"? How did the scene in Wilson's hotel room constitute "circumstantial evidence"? How do our laws protect individuals from being convicted on such evidence?

## Thunder Road (p. 32)

### I. Quick Quiz

Mark the following statements *T* if they are true; *F* if they are false. Count 3 points for each. Total: 30.

- 1. The race car Barney bought for the Indianapolis races was a Stutz Bearcat.
- 2. Although Pete didn't like Rocky Revere, he respected Rocky's driving.
- 3. Pete's "dream car" was built by Lou Cregar.
- 4. Pete Elliot and Red Smith belonged to a hot-rod

club and were eager to develop safety rules for rodders.

- 5. Jed Marion went to Indianapolis with Barney and Pete as a mechanic.
- 6. Barney had intended from the moment he bought his race car that Pete should drive it at Indianapolis.
- 7. Rocky Revere drove Faulkner's blue car in the Indianapolis race.
- 8. Pete stopped for one tire change during the race.
- 9. Rocky Revere came within five feet of beating Pete at Indianapolis.
- 10. Pete and Jed hoped to become partners in an auto-equipment business.

My score \_\_\_\_\_

My total score \_\_\_\_\_

Perfect Total Score: 100

Answers Appear in Teacher Edition

## II. What Do You Think?

Was Pete's Elliot's love of cars mainly accountable for his enjoyment of the thrills of high speed? Explain your answer with reference to Pete's feelings about hot-rodding and his attitude toward his victory in the black *Cregar*.

For what reasons have hot-rodders sometimes been criticized? Do you think that such criticism applies to most hot-rodders—many of them—or to just a few who do not have enough respect for their cars and their own safety to practice the necessary precautions?

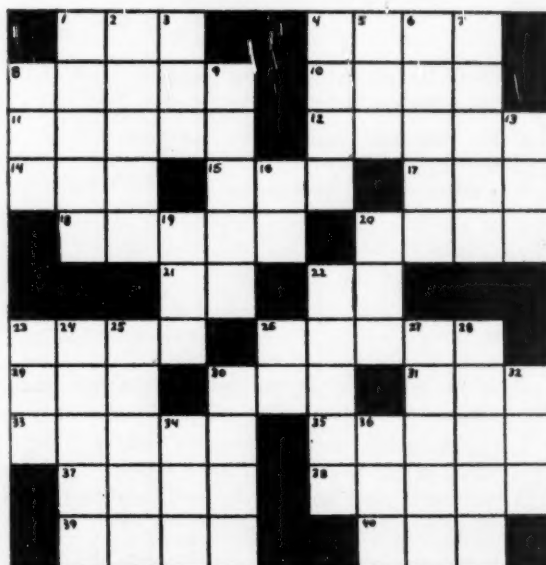
## ACROSS

1. Sheep talk.
- \* 4. Possible destination for space travelers.
- \* 8. Super \_\_\_\_\_ refers to travel at speeds faster than sound.
10. Enthusiastic verve.
11. Inflamed with wrath.
- \* 12. Electronic device for detecting aircraft.
14. Telephone (abbrev.).
15. Feminine pronoun.
17. Anger.
- \* 18. Newest type of airplane wing, shaped like a triangle.
20. Vended.
21. In this manner.
22. Civil Engineer (abbrev.).
- \* 23. This pull to one side is corrected by stabilizers on an airplane.
26. Sharps and \_\_\_\_\_.
29. Poem of high moral purpose.
- \* 30. Civil aviation in the United States is run by this agency (abbrev.).
31. Opposite of "downs."
- \* 33. Popular means of transportation in air age.
- \* 35. Wing support from fuselage of airplane.
37. Wicked.
- \* 38. Name for jet plane used in Korea.
39. Exchange something for money.
40. Kitchen utensil used for cooking.

## DOWN

1. Slang for "crammed."
- \* 2. The \_\_\_\_\_ of an airplane wing determines the amount of drag.
- \* 3. Medium through which planes fly.
4. Only.
5. Alabama (abbrev.).
- \* 6. This plays a vital role in air safety by providing contact between planes and ground crews.
7. Become tangled.
8. Perched.
9. Sacs in a body containing liquid or gassy contents.
13. \_\_\_\_\_, white, and blue.
16. Exclamation of laughter.
19. Latitude (abbrev.).
- \* 20. The \_\_\_\_\_ plane can land on water.
22. Group of students taught by the same teacher.
23. Not the bottom.
- \* 24. Operates a plane at the lowest speed with transmission disengaged.
25. Depart.
26. Fourth note of scale.
- \* 27. \_\_\_\_\_ jet refers to an engine using the turbine discharge as a propulsive jet.
28. Sudden burst of speed.
30. Prison room.
32. Saint (feminine, abbrev.).
34. Nothing.
36. Strike lightly.

## Our Air Age



• There are 48 words in this puzzle. The words starred with an asterisk (\*) are all used in reference to air or space travel. Allow yourself 4 points for each starred word (there are 15) and one point for each of the others. Add a bonus of 7 points if you get all the starred words right. If you get all the words, plus the bonus, you should have a total score of 100. Answers are on page 19, but don't look now. Wait until you have completed the puzzle. Why spoil your fun?

## Have Fun with Words

### Valentine Special

"Love's old sweet song" is one of the great themes of prose and poetry. Probably more writers have had more to say about love (and fewer have agreed on it) than about almost any other single subject.

This month, as a bow to Valentine's Day, we've selected some key words from ten quotations concerning "that fatal malady" as the basis for our vocabulary exercises. Once you've matched the words in Section I with their correct definitions, you can complete these quotations, which you'll find in Section II.

1. Match the words in *Column I* with their correct definitions in *Column II* by placing the *letter* of the appropriate *Column II* definition opposite the number of the *Column I* word. Count five points for each definition you place correctly. Total: 50.

| <i>Column I</i> | <i>Column II</i>           |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 1. antidote     | a. obstructions, barriers  |
| 2. volatile     | b. incapable of error      |
| 3. depraved     | c. give life to            |
| 4. prudence     | d. remedy                  |
| 5. indisputable | e. confers, discusses      |
| 6. infallible   | f. airy, changeable        |
| 7. animate      | g. dress, attire           |
| 8. parleys      | h. not to be contradicted  |
| 9. impediments  | i. evil, corrupt           |
| 10. raiment     | j. carefulness, good sense |

My score \_\_\_\_\_

### Put Words to Work

II. First, correct any mistakes you have made in Section I. Then insert in the blank spaces in each of the following quotations the word from *Column I* which best fits the definition given in parentheses at the end of the quotation. Count five points for each. Total: 50.

1. In love as in war, a fortress that \_\_\_\_\_ is half taken.—De Valois. (engages in talk)

2. Love keeps the cold out better than a cloak; it serves for food and \_\_\_\_\_.—Longfellow. (clothing)

3. As love without esteem is \_\_\_\_\_ and capricious, esteem without love is languid and cold.—Johnson. (fickle, insubstantial)

4. O love, when thou gettest dominion over us, we may bid good-by to \_\_\_\_\_.—La Fontaine. (caution, reasonableness)

5. It is not decided that women love more than men, but it is \_\_\_\_\_ that they love better.—Sanial-Dubay. (undeniable)

### Dig Those Crazy Bearskins!

**berserk.** "It is in China, however, that the canine kingdom goes completely *berserk*."—*How to Bark Abroad*, (p. 5).

Once upon a time—in Norwegian myth—there was a fearsome warrior named Berserk. He was so called because he wore bearskins as clothing. ("Berserk," in Old Norse, meant "bear shirt.")

Berserk had twelve sons, as fierce as himself, who were known as the "Berserkers." Legend has it that these warriors terrorized the Norwegian countryside for many years, and could not be defeated in war by any number of ordinary men.

When the Berserkers went into battle, a frenzy came over them. They howled like wolves, gnashed their teeth on their shields, growled like bears, and foamed at the mouth.

The wild behavior of the Berserkers in battle accounts for the meaning of our English word *berserk*. "To go berserk" is to go into a mad frenzy—to go completely out of control.



6. O heart, love is thy bane and thy \_\_\_\_\_.—Mme. Dudevant. (cure)

7. Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit \_\_\_\_\_.—Shakespeare. (obstacles)

8. Only those who love with the heart can \_\_\_\_\_ the love of others.—Stevens. (bring into being)

9. Man, while he loves, is never quite \_\_\_\_\_.—Lamb. (debased, low)

10. There are several remedies which will cure love, but there are no \_\_\_\_\_ ones.—Rochefoucauld. (absolutely certain)

My score \_\_\_\_\_

My total score \_\_\_\_\_

Perfect total score: 100

Answers appear in Teacher Edition

### Attention, Rodders!

We're told on good authority that anyone who's up on rodders' lingo should be able to identify these terms. How many do you know? Here they are: *cracker*, *junker*, *cream-puff*, *sagamore*, *molasses*, *doughnuts*, *dog*, *coke*, and *crate*.



## Composition Capers

### You Are There

So you're ready to write the story you've been planning for such a long time. You have the characters, setting, and plot firmly in mind. You have paper and pencil. You start to write—and discover that you can write up this skeleton of a story that you have in mind in a paragraph or two. You have no real story at all! Oh dear!

What's the matter? You've tried to write a story without the details that a good writer uses to make his characters and events "come to life"—that give flesh to the skeleton of his story.



Your problem is: *What details will bring your skeleton to life?* First of all you will look for details that will enable the reader to *see* and to *understand* the facts about the characters and situation.

Of course, you yourself must have a clear idea of the characters and situations in your story yourself. This is one good reason why it's often wise to write about something based on your own experience and obser-

vation, so you will have the details at your fingertips. (It's unlikely that you could select the details that would make an African jungle real for a reader if you've never seen such a jungle.)

Now let's be more specific. Suppose you were writing a story about a boy who is moving to the city from the country and has to decide whether he should take his dog (a big collie) with him or whether it would be fairer to the dog to leave him with friends in the country, where he would be happier than in a city apartment.

Would this be a good first paragraph for this story?

"George was a sixteen-year-old boy, who attended Tuscan High School. He was a senior there. He was a good-looking fellow, with well-shaped features. He was on the tall side and rather lean. He had a wonderful personality, a good sense of humor, and had many talents. He was very popular with all his classmates."

No one could say that this paragraph does not include details. But what do these details tell us? Very little. First of all, they are too general. "Good-looking"—"wonderful personality"—and "many talents" suggest only vague impressions that might apply to thousands of boys. They don't help us *see* or *understand* George as a particular person. *Specific* details are needed here. For example, saying that George had a "quick wide grin" would suggest more about his personality than the general statement that he has a "wonderful personality."

Secondly, the details in this paragraph are not the *best* details for the story. They do nothing to prepare the reader to understand the relationship between George and his dog, and the decision George must make as to whether or not to keep his dog. In another kind of story, full details about

George's appearance and personality might be important; in the story about George and his dog, they are largely irrelevant.

The reader wants to know about the attachment between George and his dog—the look in the dog's eyes as George scratches his ears in a way the dog likes; George's memories of how he had taken care of the dog as a puppy, etc. Such details are necessary to make the story situation real and immediate to the reader.

### The Telling Detail

Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews, the author of "The Counsel Assigned" (p. 8), selects her details with great skill. She makes you feel as if you had been there, in that crowded courtroom, on the day when Abraham Lincoln was counsel for the defendant. Each detail suggests a whole series of ideas and impressions.

The character of Lincoln comes through to us in terms of: his "deep eyes under the overhanging brows—eyes keen, dreamy, sad, humorous;" his face that reminds the county chairman of "mountain cliffs . . . seamed with lines of outer weather and inner torment." We "see" him as he walks—"with long, lounging steps." We know before we are told that "he was a man of the people, in look and manner."

At no one point in the story does Mrs. Andrews give us a "catalog" of facts about Lincoln's appearance. But because such details as she gives about him are suggestive and vivid, we can fill in the rest, and "see" the man.

The author tells us little about the defendant's mother. But we know that she has "thin hands" and a "worn calico dress." These two simple details help us to understand the woman's simple, pioneer character much more effectively than several paragraphs of general description about her "poverty," "hard life," etc., might have done.

The most important detail we are given about her son's appearance is that he had a "conspicuous bright head of golden hair." And this detail is enough to make us feel the pathos of the boy's situation. We "see" that bright golden head as if it were spotlighted in the courtroom.

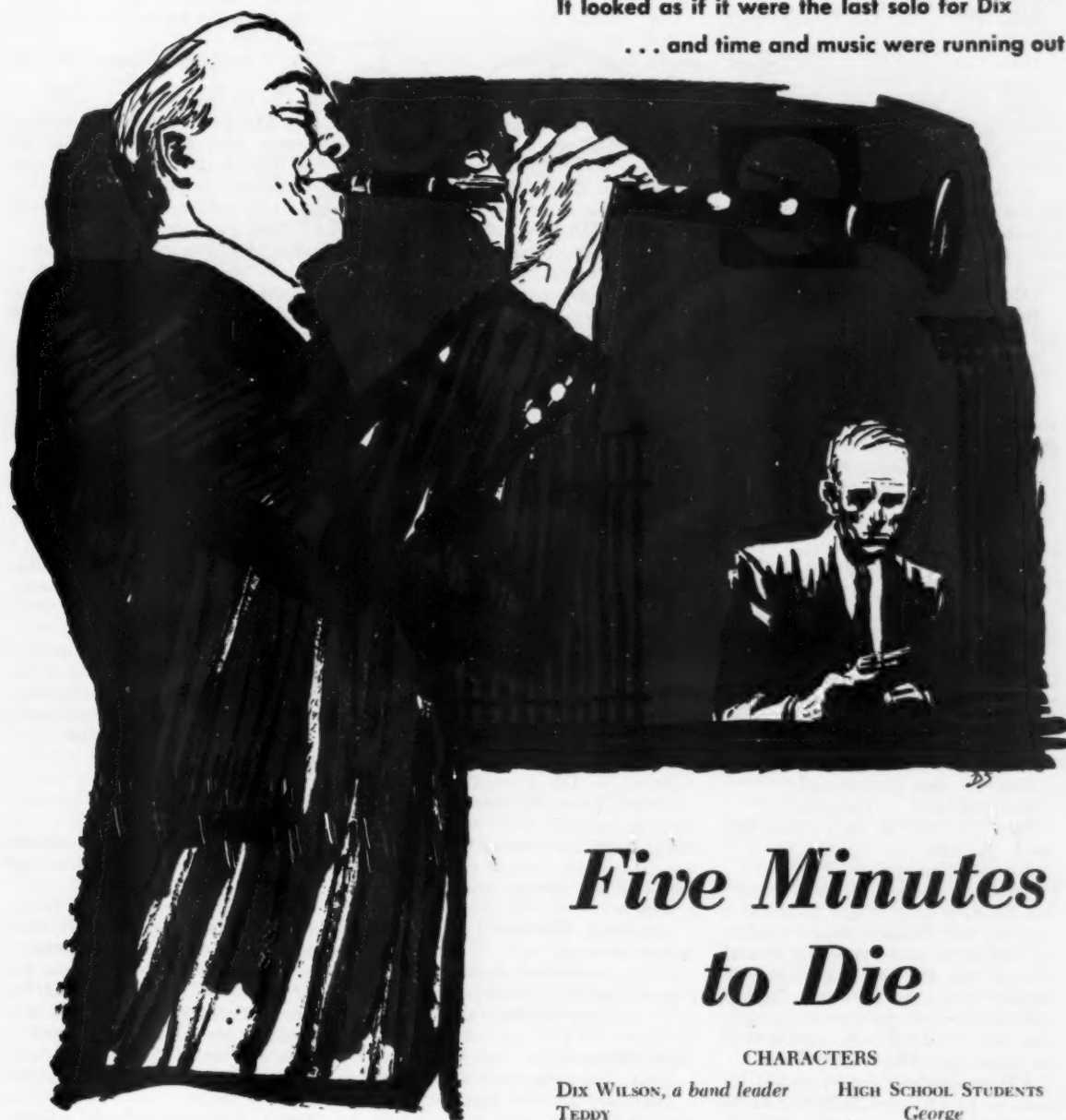
With a few well-chosen details, Mrs. Andrews also sketches in the courtroom itself, so that we can take our seats upon the benches, and see ourselves there. (Additional information—such as the location of exits and entrances, the number of benches, etc.—would have been superfluous in this story.)

### Look Sharply!

If you train yourself to notice and evaluate significant details in what you see around you, you will be able to draw on these observations to use in your own writing.

Give yourself exercises in "detail-spotting." Think, for example, of some such general idea as a bitterly cold day. What details could you choose that would make a reader *feel* that cold day? Perhaps you'd be reminded of the brittle crackling of ice-covered branches—your own breath in a frosted cloud—the dry squeak of snow underfoot—cold tears in your eyes. What other details can you think of that would capture the quality of a cold day?

It looked as if it were the last solo for Dix  
... and time and music were running out



## *Five Minutes to Die*

### CHARACTERS

|                               |                      |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| DIX WILSON, a band leader     | HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS |
| TEDDY                         | George               |
| JULIA                         | Emily                |
| MR. SPICER, a history teacher | Bob                  |
| MR. AUSTIN                    | Don                  |

A TV play adapted by Paul Monash

Story by  
E. JACK NEWMAN and JOHN M. HAYES

Illustrated by David Stone

Camera opens on the gymnasium of the North Rapids High School. No longer just a gym, it has been set up for a senior prom. Chairs along the wall, a table with a punch-bowl and some Dixie Cups. Festoons hanging down. Banners on the wall. Camera dollies in toward the improvised band-stand at one end of the gym.

Two boys of about seventeen are setting up the band instruments and music stands. On the drums we see the initials: "D. W." The taller boy, Don Scott, is big and rangy,

seems a natural leader. The shorter boy is Bob.

BOB: What a deal! The Arrangements Committee!

DON: You asked for it. You begged to be put on.

BOB: Sure, but . . . I didn't know it would be *this* much work. I must have lined up a million chairs. What's the time?

(Don glances at his wristwatch. As he does so, George appears. George is a couple of years older, a recent alumnus; he swaggers around, the "big shot.")

DON: Eight-fifteen.

BOB: Emily ought to be here. I told her to meet me here.

GEORGE: Hiya, Don. Hi, Bob.

DON: 'Lo, George.

GEORGE (looks around, approves): You kids are doing a good job. This is going to be the best dance we ever had. (To Bob) You bringing Emily?

BOB: She's coming here early. To meet me.

DON: To meet him! Listen! She wants an introduction to Dix Wilson.

GEORGE: Yeah? What for?

BOB: You know how Emily is, kind of crazy. She thinks she can make an impression on Mr. Wilson.

DON: I'll bet she asks him if she can sing with his band tonight. (Don has taken a clarinet out of its case on the bandstand, and is turning it over and over in his hands.)

BOB: That's his stick.

DON: He sure plays it cool.

BOB: But listen . . . put it back.

DON: The way he pours it out, he's great, that Dix.

BOB: He'll murder you if he sees . . .

(Don lifts the clarinet to his mouth and begins to play. It isn't good and it isn't too bad. Camera moves in close on Don as he plays. Abruptly a hand reaches into the shot and takes the clarinet from Don's mouth. Camera pulls back as Don turns to face a short, wiry man of about forty, with a tired yet tense face. This is Dix Wilson.)

A long moment. Then Dix smiles. He nods as he lifts the clarinet. And he plays. He plays it out. And the kids watch, a hero-worship coming into their faces as they watch and listen. Finally, he stops. There is a suspended second or two. Then Bob breaks it.)

BOB: That was great, crazy.

(Dix answers with a small tired smile.)

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DON: It really was great, Mister Wilson.

DIX: Thanks, kid.

DON: You know, we've got a little combo. I play the stick . . .

DIX (starting off with the clarinet, with a wistful smile): Stay with it, kid. If you think you've got it, stay with it.

(Dix goes off the bandstand. The two boys watch him. They've had a big moment. Now Dix is crossing toward the door which leads to the dressing rooms. The door opens and an attractive girl comes through. She is Julia. Julia and Dix recognize each other from a distance. Dix stops for a long pause. This means something to him. Then he goes on.)

JULIA: Hello, Dix.

DIX: Hello, Julia. (Pause) What are you doing here?

JULIA: I came to see you, Dix.

DIX: Me? You don't live in this town, do you?

JULIA: No. I live in Des Moines.

DIX: I thought you went back to your folks.

JULIA: I did.

DIX: They didn't live in Des Moines.

JULIA: I didn't stay with them, Dix. A friend of mine gave me a job. I'm the Midnight Gal.

DIX: Midnight Gal?

JULIA: Radio. I do a platter show.

DIX (a little bitterly): I thought you wanted out of the show business.

JULIA: Not the business.

DIX: What then? Me?

JULIA: No, Dix. It wasn't you. I told you that. It was the road, Dix. We'd travel from Philly to L. A., a hundred stops, every hotel room the same. It was the bus and the road and the room, Dix. I didn't want a room. I wanted a home.

DIX: Yeah. Too bad I didn't work in a tailor shop.

JULIA: I wouldn't want you to be anyone else, Dix. I wouldn't want you to be anything else. But I couldn't take it.

DIX: Okay, baby.

JULIA: You understand, Dix?

DIX: Sure. Didn't I sign the divorce papers? Didn't I make it easy? I understand. (He starts to step by her. She blocks him.)

JULIA: I still love you, Dix.

DIX: What are you trying to do? I'm still on the road, Julia—more than ever. I don't get club dates, house dates. All I do now is go from room to room. You get it?

JULIA: I play a record of yours once every night; at least once every night.

DIX: The Midnight Gal. Thanks.

JULIA: They're great, Dix.

DIX: They aren't me. Not any more. The feeling's dribbled out, night after

night, in all these hick towns. Like bleeding to death, a drop at a time. I'm faking, Julia, I'm faking like mad.

JULIA: Dix . . .

DIX: I don't feel it any more. It's gone.

JULIA: The boys . . . ?

DIX: They're gone too. Chig Thompson went with Kenton, Bill Candoli joined a pit band in Cleveland. I got all new sidemen, and they can't carry me long. Don't you try. (He goes around her toward the door.)

JULIA (hesitates, then catches up to him): I'll be here. I'm going back to the hotel to change. I want to sing with you tonight, Dix.

DIX: You're rocking.

JULIA: I want to. I know any song you've got. Don't forget, I'm the Midnight Gal.

DIX: Yeah, what about your show tonight?

JULIA: My show's on tape tonight.

(Dix looks at her a long time. He's beginning to believe, and it hurts to believe. But it hurts more not to.)

DIX: Okay. We start at nine.

JULIA (starts to throw her arms around Dix, but he steps back): Dix . . .

DIX: Nine o'clock.

(Dix goes through the door. Julia stands there, watching him for a moment, then she starts to cross the floor. Camera loses her to pick up the boys.)

BOB: You know who that is?

DON: Who?

BOB: The Midnight Gal.

DON: No kidding! Didn't she used to sing with his outfit?

BOB: You bet. And she was married to him. I wonder what busted them up? Too bad, anyway.

(Cut to: Dix's dressing room. Teddy, manager for Dix's band, a short, stout man, is sitting on the chair, counting a large roll of bills. He is just about finished when the door opens and Dix comes in. Teddy finishes counting, puts a wrapper around the bills, starts to mark a number on them.)

DIX: Are we earning a living this tour? How much?

TEDDY: Five thousand, and unfortunately not a cop in town.

DIX: Where are they—at a convention?

TEDDY: Train wreck—about 20 miles away. So be careful with this.

(Teddy hauls out a small suitcase, places it on the chair, and opens it. Camera moves in as he opens the suitcase, shows a stack of photos of Dix lying on a shirt, and a revolver. Teddy throws the money in. Starts to close the suitcase and changes his mind. Instead he picks up one of the photos.)

TEDDY: You ought to have them





print up some more of these photos. Running out.

DIX (taking photo from him): That was eight years ago.

TEDDY: That's why I say to print these. You take new ones, you'll have to get them retouched.

DIX: Thanks.

TEDDY: I'm just trying to save you money.

DIX: I know.

TEDDY: What's gnawing, Dix?

DIX: Nothing.

(Dix puts the photo back in the suitcase, dropping it on top of the gun. Teddy is watching him closely.)

TEDDY: I saw Julia.

DIX: Where?

TEDDY: At the hotel. The Commercial. (Coming over to Dix, he puts an arm around his shoulder.) Can you two make it again, Dix?

DIX: How?

TEDDY: Maybe . . . settle down.

DIX: How, Teddy, how?

TEDDY: I don't know, Dix. I can try to book you for some steady job.

DIX: You've tried, Teddy.

TEDDY: Try, try again.

DIX: What're you going to do, Teddy? Beg them? Show them eight-year-old photos? Play them ten-year-old platters?

TEDDY: You've still got it, Dix. It's got to be there. I have faith. Once a man has it inside of him, it don't vanish like smoke. It's there, Dix. (A little weakly) Maybe you ain't letting it come out.

SOUND: A knock on the door.

GEORGE'S VOICE: Mister Schuster?

TEDDY: Yeah. Coming. (Goes to door.) See you Dix.

DIX (nods): See you'll be here tonight.

TEDDY: I know.

DIX: I'm going to have her on the stand. She's going to sing.

(This is news to Teddy. But he nods.

Goes out. Dix plays a couple of riffs on the clarinet. Behind him the door opens slowly. A girl of about sixteen, Emily, comes halfway in. Then she knocks.)

DIX (without looking around): Come in. (Emily watches him, fascinated. Suddenly Dix realizes that someone is in the room, but not speaking. He turns around, sees Emily.) Hello, what do you want?

EMILY: Mister Wilson, I . . .

DIX: What are you doing here?

EMILY: I came to see you, Mr. Wilson . . .

DIX: Not now, honey . . . (He turns away and picks up the clarinet again.) I'm practicing.

EMILY: I wanted to speak to you.

DIX: About what?

EMILY: Well, I'm an admirer of yours and . . .

DIX (he knows these crushes; gently): I'll see you at the dance, honey.

EMILY: I . . . (Makes it now) . . . I want you to hear me sing, Mister Wilson. I want to be a singer.

DIX: You want to be a singer?

EMILY: It's my ambition.

DIX: Maybe later we'll do a number. (He starts to steer her toward the door. She spies the open suitcase.)

EMILY: Can I have a photograph?

DIX: Later.

EMILY: Now, please.

DIX: Later, honey . . .

EMILY: I want it now.

(Emily is evidently a kid who is accustomed to getting her own way. She darts past Dix and reaches into the suitcase. He moves to intercept her, to close the suitcase. The suitcase topples from the chair and falls to the ground. Emily is bending over to grab it. And there is a sudden shot. Emily straightens slowly, holding her side. Dix looks bewildered. Then he sees the gun lying on the floor. He shakes his head and

picks it up. Emily falls against him. As she does so, the door opens. Teddy is there. Just behind him stands Don. They see Dix holding the girl. Teddy rushes in, slams the door.)

TEDDY: What happened?

DIX: She tried to take one of the photos. Knocked over the suitcase. The gun must have bounced on the floor . . .

(Don opens the door. Starts to come in. Teddy blocks him.)

TEDDY: Get a doctor, quick.

DON: What did you do?

TEDDY (pushing him toward the door): Get a doctor, hear me?

(He pushes Don out. Slams the door. Turns to Dix as Emily sinks to the floor. Teddy bends down beside Emily. Looks closely, then he stands up slowly.)

DIX (he can't believe this): She's . . . dead?

(Teddy nods his head. Dix takes a deep breath, almost a sigh. He goes to the door.)

TEDDY: Where are you going?

DIX: Got to see Julia. (As he opens the door, Bob rushes in. He looks down at Emily, his fists clenched.)

TEDDY: Better get out of here, kid.

BOB (almost to himself): He killed her.

TEDDY: Look, look, you'd better get out. (Bob turns and runs out of the door.)

(Cut to: Julia's room. Standard old-fashioned small-town hotel room. Iron bedstead, ancient oleo. Dix is sitting on the edge of the bed rubbing his knuckles.)

JULIA: Don't let it get you, Dix. It wasn't your fault. Everyone will know it was an accident.

DIX: Some kid tried to grab me when I was leaving there. I had to hit him.

JULIA: He probably didn't know.

DIX: She reached into the suitcase, that poor kid, and . . . Why did this have to happen to her? (Stops) Ah, what's the use? I'm a jinx to everybody—I'm a four-year losing streak. (Pause. He looks up.) It's been four years.

JULIA: Four years, Dix.

(He reaches for her hand, as Teddy comes rushing in.)

TEDDY: Dix . . . Dix . . . are you flipping it?

DIX: What's happening?

TEDDY: Everything. It couldn't be worse.

DIX: You told them where I am, didn't you?

TEDDY: No.

DIX: Why not?

TEDDY: It's not the cops that are looking for you, Dix. It's the crowd from the dance.

JULIA: Teddy, what do you mean?

TEDDY: A train cracked up down the line. Every cop in town is out there.

And this mob is looking for Dix. (*Dix goes to the window to look out. Teddy pulls him back.*) Get away from that window, Dix. If they find you, they'll kill you.

Dix: Kill me! What for? What for? (*Camera moves in for close shot of Dix. Then fades out. Scene changes to the lobby of the hotel. At the desk, Mister Austin, the owner of the hotel, is listening to someone who is talking to him on the phone. In the background, Teddy and Julia and Dix come down the stairs. As they cross the lobby toward the desk, Austin talks into the phone.*)

AUSTIN: Yes . . . Thanks for telling me. (*Pause*) They're here. They're coming to the desk. (*He hangs up as the three reach the desk.*)

JULIA: Dix, this is Mister Austin, the owner of the hotel. (*To Austin*) There's been some trouble, Mister Austin. Perhaps we should get Dix out of town.

TEDDY: We could use the bus.

Dix: And strand the boys? How are they?

TEDDY: They're okay. You're the center of interest.

JULIA: Mister Austin, if you have a car . . .

AUSTIN: It's in the garage.

JULIA: If you could get it . . .

AUSTIN: I can't. (*His manner is so curt and hostile that Julia looks at him, suddenly sensing his enmity.*)

JULIA: Oh.

TEDDY: The bus is right down the street.

Dix: Why do I have to run away?

TEDDY: You want to be a martyr?

Dix: To what?

TEDDY: To I don't know what. To something that doesn't make sense.

Dix: I've got no reason to run.

TEDDY: You want to be a hero? Be a hero tomorrow, in the next town, where there are some police.

(*Teddy goes to the door of the hotel and looks out. As he does so, we hear some crowd noise, muffled. Teddy comes back quickly.*)

TEDDY: They're coming down the street.

JULIA (*frightened, to Austin*): Is there a back entrance?

AUSTIN: There'll be someone there.

TEDDY: What makes you so sure?

AUSTIN: Try it. (*He looks at Teddy very directly, and now Teddy realizes that Austin is against them.*)

Dix: I'm going out to talk to them.

TEDDY: Dix, you can't. There's a couple of hundred people out there now. Some of them have guns. They won't listen.

Dix: What do they think I did?

AUSTIN: You know what you did, Mister Wilson.

Dix: What do you think I did? (*Austin half turns away. A rock crashes through the front window. Austin comes out from behind the desk. Another rock. Slightly muffled, we hear a roar from the angry crowd. And it has a strange tone.*)

AUSTIN: I heard a couple of those kids saw you, the gun in your hand, holding the girl.

Dix (*turning to Teddy*): You know what happened. You believe me, don't you, Teddy? You know me.

TEDDY: I believe you, Dix. And I know you. They don't. They all have a picture in their mind. A band leader. Who's always on the move, a toughy . . .

JULIA: That's not Dix. That's not Dix at all.

TEDDY: This is their picture. So there must be a way out through the kitchen. Let's beat it.

AUSTIN: You won't get away.

TEDDY: Thanks for the aid and comfort, Mister. Come on.

(*Teddy leads the way as they cross the lobby toward the rear. As they almost get there, George steps into the lobby from the rear door, followed by Don, who is carrying the clarinet. And behind him a big kid with a baseball bat. Each group stands his ground for a moment. Then George slowly raises a rifle.*)

GEORGE (*flat, playing a recently learned part*): Come on, Mister Wilson.

DON: Look out, everyone. We don't want to harm anyone but him.

Dix: I didn't kill that girl. It was an accident.

DON: Don't forget, Mister, we saw that "accident."

BOB: She was my girl.

TEDDY: Fellers, listen to me . . .

GEORGE: Want to go outside with us?

JULIA: I'm telling you Dix didn't do anything. He wouldn't. I ought to know. I'm his wife.

BOB: You divorced him.

DON: We can guess why.

JULIA: You don't know. You can't guess. I couldn't explain . . .

GEORGE: We're not asking for an explanation. (*The front door of the Hotel bursts open and a few people push in. This is the vanguard of the mob. George points the gun at Dix's stomach.*) Let's go, Mister Wilson. (*Dix holds still for a couple of seconds. Then as he turns to march across the lobby in front of Don, a man in his 40's, wearing glasses, breaks through the group at the front door. He rushes across the lobby.*)

SPICER: Do you know what you're doing?

GEORGE: We know, Mr. Spicer.

DON (*vehemently*): You bet we know, Mr. Spicer.

SPICER: George, put down that gun. Put it down.

GEORGE (*smiles, holds onto the gun*): I finished school two years ago, Mr. Spicer. You can't give me orders.

SPICER: Leave this man for the police. He has a right to a trial.

DON: Some people don't deserve a trial.

GEORGE: He'll hire an expensive lawyer who'll bulldoze some jury, and he'll get off easy.

SPICER: We have courts. Due process of law. I understand how you feel, Mr. Austin, but I've been teaching here for thirteen years . . . teaching respect for law—(*to Austin*) You can save his life, Mr. Austin. You know that.

AUSTIN: Is there any reason why I should?

SPICER: Yes, and you know that, too. Mr. Austin . . .

AUSTIN (*turns to George and crowd*): George—I want to think this over. I want you to get out of my place until I do.

GEORGE: If you say so, Mr. Austin. Okay. But we'll only give you five minutes. (*George signals and the crowd draws away, out of the hotel. There is a pause.*)

SPICER: I'm going out and try to talk to them again. (*He goes.*)

AUSTIN: Due process. Law and order . . . words . . . words . . .

Dix (*looking out window, absently*): Take a look out there. Know what it reminds me of? Kind of like the whole town went wild, the night before the celebration. Big Game. Some of them are laughing. They're actually laughing.

JULIA: If we could reach their parents . . .

Dix: Those aren't only kids. Not any more. (*Notices Austin behind the desk, at the phone.*) What's he doing?

TEDDY: I don't know.

Dix: Too bad the cops aren't here. They're missing the big show.

JULIA: Maybe that teacher can persuade them.

Dix: Not a chance. Don't you see what they're doing? They're flexing their muscles. They're feeling big.

JULIA (*crossing to Austin, who has hung up the phone*): What are you doing?

AUSTIN: I tried to make a phone call.

JULIA: To whom?

AUSTIN: It doesn't matter. I couldn't reach him.

JULIA: It has to matter. These people. They seem to respect you. Won't you do something to stop them? Won't you go out and help that teacher?

AUSTIN: As I say, why should I?

JULIA: Because Dix didn't kill that girl.

AUSTIN: Did you see it?

JULIA: No, but . . .

AUSTIN (*cutting her short*): Those boys saw it. They saw him holding her. They saw the gun in his hand.

DIX: I swear to you on anything. (*Angered by Austin's scoffing, Dix makes a grab for him. Austin steps back quickly and pulls a gun.*)

AUSTIN: Don't do that, Mister.

DIX: What do you want me to do, be down and take it?

AUSTIN: Pray, Mister.

DIX: You don't care whether I pray or not. You just want to see me sweat.

(*There is a sudden increased roar from the crowd. Teddy rushes to the window. Julia and Dix follow. Austin stands still, watching. The teacher is obviously not winning the crowd.*)

JULIA (*frightened*): Dix, they won't listen to that teacher.

DIX (*bitterly, to Austin*): Like your show? (*Austin doesn't answer. Julia comes up to Dix.*)

JULIA: It can't happen, Dix.

DIX: I was dying anyway. Like a balloon with a hole in it. The music was going out like air. I was fading away.

JULIA: You made music, Dix. You made some wonderful music.

DIX: I remember the beginning. I was a hot kid. I had bounce. I could lick the stick for hours, for days. It was always there. It would ride out. If you'd cut me then, I would have bled ragtime.

JULIA: I'll never forget the first time I heard you, Dix.

DIX: It was a great combo then. We could carry it all the way up and drop it all the way down. It was cream . . . (*Dix notices the clarinet on the floor, where Bob dropped it. As he talks he bends down to pick it up. He stares at the clarinet for a long time. He is thinking, recollecting, then he starts to play. It starts slow, reminiscent, and then slides into a hot tempo, and Dix really rides it out. Austin moves in, his face showing resentment, and he starts to raise his gun. Teddy blocks him.*)

TEDDY: You told him to pray.

(*Julia's eyes are on Dix. Teddy ignores Austin for a few moments, watching and listening. And Austin, although he doesn't understand what is happening, knows something is happening, and he watches. Suddenly Dix cuts it, throws away the clarinet. Dix starts to walk across the lobby. Austin takes a step after him.*)

DIX: Move away. I'll walk out of here alone.

JULIA: Dix, please . . .

## Nancy Hanks

By Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benet

If Nancy Hanks\*

Came back as a ghost

Seeking news

Of what she loved most,

She'd ask first

"Where's my son?

What's happened to Abe?

What's he done?

"Poor little Abe,

Left all alone

Except for Tom,

Who's a rolling stone;

He was only nine

The year I died.

I remember still

How hard he cried.

"Scraping along

In a little shack,

With hardly a shirt

To cover his back,

And a prairie wind

To blow him down,

Or pinching times

If he went to town.

"You wouldn't know

About my son?

Did he grow tall?

Did he have fun?

Did he learn to read?

Did he get to town?

Do you know his name?

Did he get on?"

\* Nancy Hanks Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln's mother.

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DIX: Goodbye, honey. (*They look at each other for a moment. Teddy comes up.*)

TEDDY: What can I do, Dix?

DIX: Shake hands. (*They shake hands.*) Midnight Gal, don't play my records, any more.

(*Austin has been watching all this, and it affects him, as the music did, and he still doesn't know how or why—or even what. Dix turns and walks very slowly toward the door.*)

JULIA (*to Austin*): You can stop this. And you know it. But you don't know Dix. You're going to find out you helped kill a decent man, one of the best who ever lived. You won't feel good, Mr. Austin.

AUSTIN: I don't . . .

JULIA (*going right on*): You're going to sweat, you're going to have to live with . . .

AUSTIN (*interrupting*): Wait. (*Dix stops, with his hand on the door. Austin crosses to him very fast.*) Don't. Don't go out there.

DIX: I've got no choice. They'll come in and get me.

AUSTIN: That teacher's right. You'll get your chance in court. . . . They won't take you . . . not from me. (*The phone at the desk rings. Continues. Austin and Dix come to the desk slowly. Austin takes the phone.*) Hotel . . . Yes . . . Yes . . . (*A long pause*) Yes, I understand. Thank you. Thank you very much. (*Austin hangs up. He lays*

*the gun on the counter.*) Doctor Medford. He just finished his . . . He says from the angle of the bullet he's sure . . . (*Stops.*) I'm sorry, Mister Wilson. Forgive me.

(*In the background the door opens and George and some of the mob burst in. In the foreground Austin holds out his hand to Dix. The mob surges forward as Dix turns his back on them to take Austin's hand. With the hand-shake the mob stops. Only George detaches himself from the mob, and comes forward with his shotgun.*)

GEORGE: Hey! What is this, Mr. Austin?

AUSTIN: Doctor Medford called me. He said he's sure it was an accident. . . . So, go away, George, all of you—go away—leave this man alone.

DIX (*bewildered, turning from George to Austin*): Why did the doctor call you?

AUSTIN: Because . . . I'm Emily's father.

(*Don has laid the shotgun on the counter of the desk and is walking away. The mob recedes, George last of all. Dix turns wearily to Julia.*)

DIX: I'll quit the road.

JULIA: You don't have to. Not any more. . . . The way you played, Dix, you must keep on. Do what you want, Dix, go where you want. I'll help you make it.

DIX (*softly*): It's made, Julia. It's made.



# Cavalcade Firsts 1954

By YOUNG WRITERS

Selections from

Scholastic Writing Awards Entries

## Two Bucks of Ecstasy

In this short essay, Barbara Goldin takes you on an exhilarating winter horseback ride. Her essay won an Honorable Mention in the 1953 Scholastic Writing Awards.

MOONLIGHT MISS trotted over the fresh white path covered with the newly fallen crystals of snow. The air had a little sting to it. I rode entranced by the squeak of saddle leather, the rapid, staccato scrunch of the snow and the sucking and sighing sound of her breath. The alert twitchings of her ears told me she listened for sounds of other creatures.

Our breath vaporized in the crisp air. I imagined it to be fire gushing from the nostrils of some monster. Soon it disappeared, only to be replaced quickly.

The tall and stately pines seemed to peer at us as we rode by. Each was covered with just enough whiteness to look like a Pilgrim dressed for Sunday best. I let out a melodic yodel for sheer joy. It echoed and reechoed, dying

By Barbara Ann Goldin

Oak Park (Ill.)—River Forest High School Teacher, Mildred Linden

away into the somber peace of falling dusk.

Moonlight had stopped instantly. Her head came up, her eyes opened wide, the bit slid back loosely on her tongue and she pricked her ears. I couldn't move to break the spell. She stood with muscles tensed, poised and waiting. After absorbing the last bit of beauty from her unrehearsed drama, I murmured a few words and reassuringly patted her neck. The tenseness evaporated from her body. Once more she began picking her way through the crunchy coverlet, bobbing her head when an occasional flake threatened to tickle her nose or catch on her eyelash.

We came out of the pines and birches on to a long, flat, ocean of whiteness. It was a half mile wide and several miles long! Moonlight needed no signal from me. She gathered herself and

Barbara Goldin says that she took English riding lessons "until the excitement of a bridle path lured me from the ring." She also had a chance to ride extensively during a summer vacation at a dude ranch.

At Oak Park (Ill.)—River Forest H. S., Barbara was president of the Girls Camera Club. Although her plans for the future are still uncertain, she is interested in the possibility of becoming a photographer, reporter, or foreign correspondent.

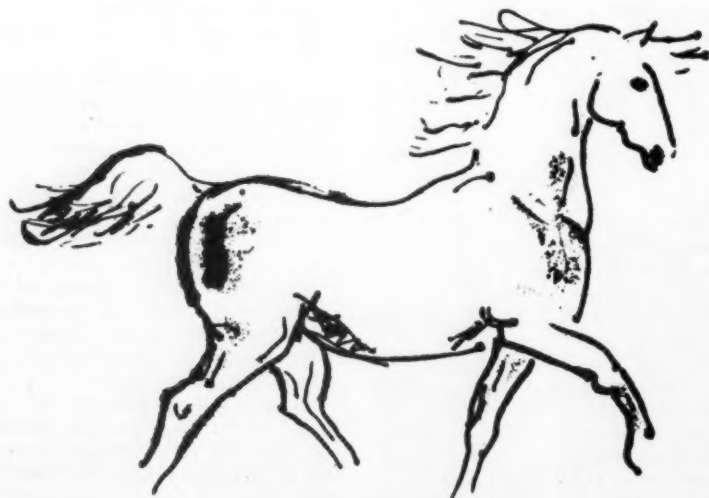


struck out with a left lead. The ground dropped slowly downward. There was beauty in our canter. I felt like part of my horse. It took no effort to sit the gait. I moved with the rhythm of her legs, swaying gently as she gathered herself each time. We moved faster and faster. The earth thudded as she flew over it. Our breath came shorter and shorter. I dropped the stirrups and pulled my knees closer and tighter to her withers. I bent down close to her neck yelling in her ear, "Ride, Moonlight, ride." I buried my head on her neck. The stinging wind blurred my eyes and her mane lashed my face like a whip. Her legs flashed up and down like a drive shaft on an engine's wheels. The thundering of her hoofs grew deafening. I lost track of time and space. We went on and on, until she had raced the last bit of ecstasy from her body.

Moonlight started slowing down. From a gallop she went into a canter, then a trot, a lope and finally into a prancing walk. I dropped my legs back into the stirrups. My cheeks stung and I had to wipe the tears from my eyes. Moonlight left a trail of foaming sweat. I could smell the damp wool of my jacket.

The first stars were out. They looked like rhinestones, sprinkled on transparent, ice-blue, frozen water. The white moon began its slow trip across the bowl of sky.

We turned and headed back down the trail, passing the familiar landmarks along the lonely road. The beauty of the



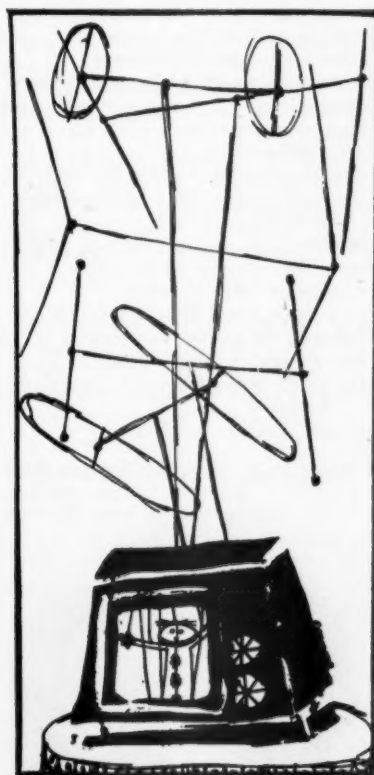
Ink drawing by Sylvia Zalla, Andover (Mass.) High School, won a place in the annual exhibition at Carnegie Institute, in the 1953 Scholastic Art Awards.

lovely winter night lay deep. I let Moonlight pick her own way.

Back at the barn, I dismounted and unsaddled her. I picked up the grooming brush and walked over to her. She nuzzled my hand. I could feel her warm breath on my fingertips. I loved best of all to give her a good rubdown.

The side door of the barn opened and the rough, unshaven stable hand stalked over. He scowled. And what? Oh, yes. I was overdue. I owed him a quarter. As he grabbed the halter from my hands he mumbled something about my mother calling, that I hadn't done my homework and I had better hurry up and take the bus home. I called after him, "Hey, can I come back next week?"

"Sure, kid, sure. If ya got the two bucks."



Drawing by Bernard Cootner, School of Industrial Art, New York, N. Y., won honors in 1953 Scholastic Art Awards.



## A Valentine for You

We're firm believers that the best valentine is one you've made yourself. We also think that there are times when you should make a valentine yourself for yourself. What kind of valentine? Here's our suggestion:

One of the most rewarding things you can do for yourself—on Valentine's Day or any other time—is to discover your own talents and abilities. You make this discovery, in part, every time you sign your name to a finished piece of creative writing. So—what nicer valentine could you give yourself this year than to mail your entry off to the Scholastic Writing Awards!

Our valentine to you will come later—in the May Awards Issue of *Literary Cavalcade*. In the May issue, you'll find the complete list of Awards winners. In addition, the May issue will be made up entirely of outstanding selections from each classification of the Writing Awards. Illustrations will also be by students; the photographs, drawings, paintings, etc., will be chosen from en-

tries in the Scholastic Art Awards and the Scholastic-Anseo Photography Awards.

There's still time to mail your Scholastic Writing Awards entry. There's even enough time for you to "start from scratch" with an idea and write a story, poem, or essay around it. But time is fleeting! The March 1st deadline for the Scholastic Writing Awards is nearer than you may think. The time for action is now.

You'll find the 1954 Scholastic Writing Awards entry blank on page 31 of this issue. Clip out or copy the blank and attach it to your manuscript when you send it in. (Rules for '54 Writing Awards on p. 39.)

All entries in the Scholastic Writing Awards are considered for publication in "Cavalcade Firsts." (Single poems are also considered for "Cavalcade Firsts," although a minimum of 50 lines is required for entrance in the Writing Awards.)

Let us hear from you!

—The Editors

## Make Your Own Simple Radio Controller

By Art Sherwood

Point Loma High School, San Diego, California  
Teacher, Elizabeth Oliver

We chuckled over this bit of "spoofing" when it arrived in our offices a month ago, and we think it will amuse you, too—especially if you've ever been baffled by a "set of simple directions."

THOSE of you who operate your radios by the twintuple-pack electronic sequence, double-filtered half-wave twin mastoid system of power distribution can use this simply made, sonic-diabola micro-wave prorator provided that (1) your systemic altoliner is not grounded, and (2) you have access to a parabolic type of micro-arc, polyfield U H F transmitter.

If you wish the wiring diagram, send a self-addressed orange crate to me, and I will send you complete instructions. This includes one complete

wiring diagram, sixty feet by three feet, and seven volumes of detailed instructions.

A few comments, however, might be helpful. If the sistolic microtone shown in the leg of ZY circuit is non-conductive at less than 48 microvolts, change the bisilicate tuning coil to one of about three ohms per microfarad, less resistance, after, of course, allowing for the cross-voltage tuning variations.

Oh, and another thing—be careful to keep the shading interceptors at a 27 degree angle to the dampening coil.

You have no idea how your operation will be improved with this type of controller. As a matter of fact, neither do I. I've been fiddling with the darned thing for three years without any success.



Water color by Robert Hopkins, Myron Herrick H. S., Cleveland, Ohio, won a place in the annual exhibition at Carnegie Institute, 1953 Scholastic Art Awards.

## ENDREMIA AND LIASON

By Janet O'Hara

Point Loma H. S., San Diego, Calif.  
Teacher, Elizabeth Oliver

*Have you ever been bemused—and confused—by a Greek myth? In this 1954 Scholastic Writing Awards entry, Janet O'Hara gives her light-hearted version of the world of mythology.*

**A**FTER having suffered through two years of translating Latin stories about how Marcus, god of This, killed Cerberus, the three-headed dog, to save his wife, Serpentina, goddess of That, only to have her kill him, I have decided that these myths are not worth the effort—any effort, for that matter. Take for example the myth, "Endremia and Liason."

Endremia was the daughter of Polygaminous, the god of Mucilage, and Reba, the goddess of Licorice. Endremia was the child of a most unhappy union, it later turned out, for when she was a tiny child her father struck her mother with an anvil, and turned himself into a lily-pad to avoid the vengeance of Jove. But Jove was too sly for Polygaminous and struck him with a bolt of lightning the size of the new Sear's store, which threw him completely off his balance, so that he toppled over into a chasm, and was dashed to death.

In the meantime, little Endremia

found herself alone in the world with nobody but Entrocine, the goddess of Lettuce, and her son Bilax, the god of Gum, to look after her. But, as Polygaminous (her father—have you forgotten already?) had turned Endremia into a mushroom before he turned himself into a lily-pad, neither of her guardians knew who she was; so their protection didn't help her much.

But Jove had not so soon forgotten the daughter of his favorite (Reba); he appeared to her (not Reba, but Endremia, who was a mushroom) one night in the shape of a mushroom gatherer. He asked her how she would like to get off that tree (she was one of those mushrooms which grow on trees) and get into his basket. Endremia, who did not know that it was Jove who was asking her, said, "Not much." Whereupon Jove unloosed his mighty wrath and struck down the whole tree with a bolt of lightning which he had brought along with him in case Endremia wouldn't listen to reason.

This is why it is never safe to eat mushrooms which grow on trees, or to refuse to get into Jove's basket.

• • •

See what I mean? Not worth the effort, was it?

## SNOW

*This is one of the poems whose striking imagery and sensitive observation won an Award for Arthur Pett in the 1953 Scholastic Writing Awards.*

Last night snow fell,  
soft on our garagetop  
and the ones for a block,  
bringing them closer together than they  
were  
red, green, brown, or black.  
Tires splash water in little waves rolling  
all the way  
down the street in front: you can hear  
it.

And in back, by the window,  
there are happy child-screams.  
First snow; the gutters are topped by it;  
snow covers the dying or dead leaves  
and crazy sidewalk cracks with  
pure white veiling.  
The long electric wires in the backyard  
are covered; the black-yesterday  
branches  
of the black walnut trees are spotted  
with blobs like cotton growing.  
Umbrellas different colors  
in a line up and down the block,  
followed by precise footsteps  
like an echo fading beneath  
the gentle flying flakes: We are all re-  
duced  
to one size this morning.

By Arthur Pett

East H. S., Salt Lake City, Utah  
Teacher, Mrs. Pansye H. Powell



Helen Kollow and Arthur Pett both won Awards in the Poetry Division of the 1953 Writing Awards. Helen's chief interest—both as a poet and a painter—is the U. S. West. Arthur hopes to become a writer because, he says, "I think that is the best way to make life better, at least the best way to make people aware of living."



## Ballad

By Helen Mathilde Rollow

West Phoenix (Ariz.) High School  
Teacher, Elizabeth Titsworth

*This is one of a group of poems that won an Award for Helen Rollow in the 1953 Scholastic Writing Awards.*

He rode a gray mare through the mountain  
Into the Valley of Mist.  
He sang a sad song of his longing  
For love of the girl he had kissed.

She stood at the foot of the mountain  
Above the Valley of Mist.  
She called to a man on horseback  
And wept for the boy she had kissed.

"Oh sir, have you seen my Johnnie?  
He left here long ago.  
His hair was as brown as the chestnut,  
His cheeks were as white as the snow."

The man in the saddle was weary.  
His face was scarred and tanned.  
His hair was as gray as the dawning.  
He'd traveled a great deal of land.

He stared at the girl beside him.  
Her cheeks were as white as the snow.  
Her hair was as gold as the sunlight.  
She had many long years to go.

"Yes, girl, I've seen your Johnnie.  
He died in the valley below.  
His heart was full of longing.  
His cheeks were as white as the snow."

He rode a gray mare through the mountain  
Away from the Valley of Mist.  
He sang a sad song of his longing  
For love of the girl he had kissed.



Character by Bernard L. Landon, Norwalk (Conn.) H. S., won honors in the 1953 Scholastic Art Awards.

## On a Boy's First Meeting With His Girl's Relatives

By Arthur T. Coleman

Robert E. Fitch H. S., Groton, Conn.  
Teacher, Verne E. Reynolds

They were a family of scissors;  
All hewn of cold, high-tempered steel;  
All snipping, trimming, cutting away  
At the boy's self-confidence.

## The Wind Is a Woman

By Sharon Sklensky

West Seattle H. S.  
Seattle, Wash.  
Teacher, Ruth L. Friar

*This poem is Sharon Sklensky's first piece of writing to be published in Literary Cavalcade. Since it is under the 50-line minimum for the poetry division of the Scholastic Writing Awards, it was considered as a contribution to "Cavalcade Firsts" alone.*

The wind is a woman; all  
Taffeta and silk.  
She rustles through the trees, her  
Skirts whispering along  
The leaves.

She runs her kind, cool fingers  
Through my hair.  
She glides over the meadows,  
The grasses bowing  
Before her.

Sometimes she's lonely, and runs  
Out to sea to whisk among the wavelets.  
When she comes back, she wraps the  
Fog around her  
Like a shawl.

Or, boisterously happy, she rushes  
through the night  
Running amuck in the thunder clouds,  
Revelling in the roar of thunder  
And the flicker  
Of lightning.

The wind is a woman, of  
Moods and fancies  
Changed by a spatter of rain,  
A wisp of fog;  
The wind is a woman.

## SCHOLASTIC WRITING AWARDS ENTRY BLANK

DIVISION (Check JUNIOR or SENIOR) JUNIOR DIVISION ☐ SENIOR DIVISION ☐

Student \_\_\_\_\_  
(Must be printed or typed)

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Principal \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print or type) (Indicate Miss, Mrs., Mr.)

Student's age on March 1, 1954 \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
CLASSIFICATION OF ENTRY (Poetry, Short Story, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this is my own original work.  
(Anyone submitting plagiarized material is liable to  
prosecution under the law.)

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Approved, Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

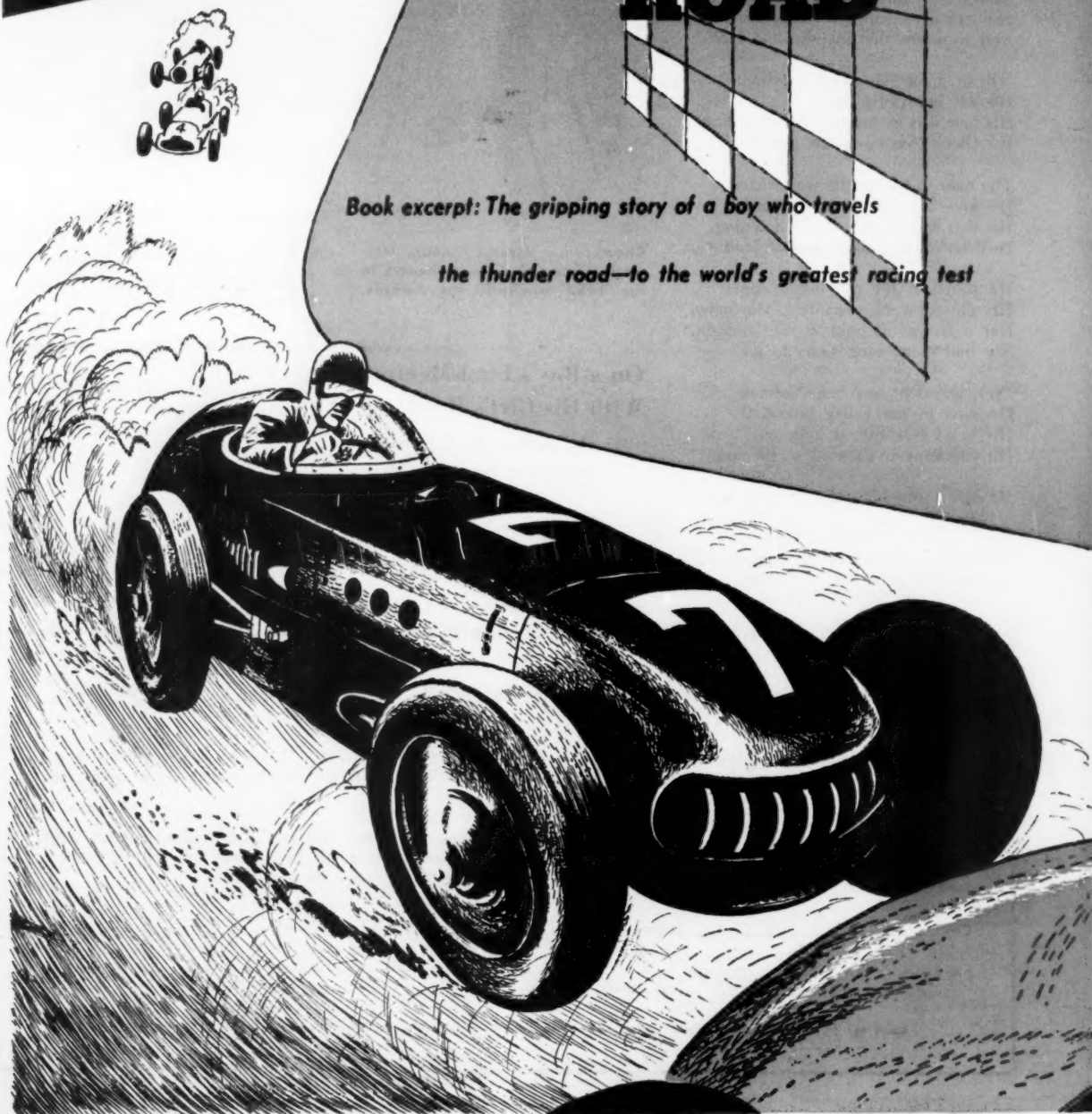
Mail to: SCHOLASTIC WRITING AWARDS, c/o Literary Cavalcade, 33 W. 42nd St., New York 36, N. Y.

Charles Beck

# THUNDER ROAD

Book excerpt: The gripping story of a boy who travels

the thunder road—to the world's greatest racing test



[When you meet Pete Elliot, the teenage hero of this story, he is spokesman for the hot-rodders in his town—that is, for those hot-rodders who belong to a club, and who set up safety rules and stick to them. Pete and his friends believe that the teen-age drivers who get written up in the newspapers for reckless driving don't represent the majority of hot-rodders. Some day Pete hopes to help the cause of the organized hot-rodders by opening a speed shop for designing and selling special equipment. But that'll take money . . . evening courses at a university . . . and at the moment Pete is just a brand new high school graduate with a lively interest in automobiles.]

**I**T WAS Barney who used to tell us about the old cars. We hung around his garage because he understood us. He was almost sixty.

He used to talk about some of the old sport cars, the Stutz Bearcats, the Jordan Playboys, the Paige Daytonas, the Marmon Speedsters. And when he'd talk about them, he'd make them come alive, and you could almost see them, on some dusty road burning toward the horizon.

"It was different then," Barney would say. "There weren't so many cars. There are more cars in this county than there were in the whole country then, and it was different."

Reprinted by permission from *Thunder Road*, by William Campbell Gault, published by E. P. Dutton & Co. Copyright, 1952, by William Campbell Gault. *Thunder Road* is a February selection of the Teen Age Book Club, and is available in a TAB edition.

It's always different. Dad used to tell me about the Rajo head he had on his Model T, and how he was the envy of every kid in the neighborhood. And then Dad acts as though he can't understand me at all, as though I'm some new species of human being invented as a plague to parents.

He forgets all about the Rajo. That's different.

But Barney seemed to understand. One afternoon I looked at the pictures he had on his walls: Oldfield and DePalma and Tommy Milton and Jimmy Murphy, Shaw and Walt Faulkner, signed pictures. I said, as a joke, "Maybe you and I could build a race car, Barney, and I could drive it."

"Race cars," he said, and sat down, just fiddling with a pencil on his desk. "That's a different business, laddie. That's not for amateurs."

"I was only kidding," I told him.

"It's an idea, though," he went on thoughtfully. "It's an idea I've been playing with."

The pictures on the wall seemed to be smiling.

I said, "Were you thinking of the dirt tracks, Barney?"

He nodded. "That—and the big one, the brickyard."

The brickyard meant Indianapolis, and Decoration Day. That was the acme, the cream, the big test. That would be no place for me. That was for men, not for boys.

He said quietly, "I had a car in that one seven times, and never came closer than fifth. And now I've got more money than a sensible man needs, and I've been dreaming again."

The pictures continued to smile.

And Barney was smiling, too. "Talk, talk, talk . . ." He stood up. "How would you like to look at a race car?"

"I'd like it."

"Let's go," he said.

He went over to give his floor manager some instructions and I went out to wait in his car. When he came out, he said, "I guess a man's never too old to make a fool of himself, is he?"

"I don't know," I replied.

"In 1927," he said, "I drove a Miller all the way at the brickyard. They had to unclamp my hands from the wheel one finger at a time. My hands ached for four days and my stomach was off for a month. Wasn't that sensible?"

"I guess not," I said. He turned his car on Wilshire and headed east.

It was one of those days when you know something good's going to happen, something exciting. The rods are all right; the rods are fine fun. But speedway cars are a step up from that in my catalogue. I'll always defend the rods and the rodders. But, personally, I wanted to travel that thunder road with Barney. I wanted to play with the big boys.

In front of Lou Cregar's garage the car came to a stop. Lou makes high-compression heads and special camshafts, but not here. Here he runs a combination superservice station and garage.

Barney climbed out, and I was still sitting there. He stood on the curb, looking at me. "What's the matter? You can't see the car from there."

"I know," I said. "Maybe I shouldn't see it. Maybe then I'll be sold all the way, Barney. The rods will never look the same to me."

"Don't worry about that," he said. "The price Lou wants for this heap, I doubt if you'll be buying it."

"No, but you will be," I said. "And I'll be driving it for you."

He stared at me. "What ever gave you that crazy notion?"

"You didn't come just for the ride."

"So I'm going to buy it, maybe. I've got a dozen racing Triple-A drivers among my friends. And you think I'd put some young ex-rodder in it?"

I nodded. "Otherwise you wouldn't be so owly. You're afraid of what my folks would say. You don't want to be responsible for putting me into a game as dangerous as track racing."

"Well," he said, and put both hands on his hips, "of all the crust. That takes it, for sheer ego. Do you realize how many really hot wheelers are looking for a mount?"

It didn't seem like one of those exciting days, not any more. I said quietly, "I guess I got off the beam. The way you were talking, in the garage, I got the idea you meant—for me to—I mean, oh, I don't know—"

By William Campbell Gault

Illustrated by Charles Bock





His voice was softer now. "It was probably my fault. I wasn't listening to anything but my own words. I'm sorry, Pete. But, kid, the dirt tracks—" He shook his head. He seemed to shiver. "You don't know what they are."

"I guess not," I said, and climbed out of the car.

### The Cregar Special

We went in together, and there it was, right inside the door. It had the Cregar nose, sloped down to a broader base, a trim and glossy black job looking—oh, I guess the word would be "jaunty." Full of "go" it looked, hot and ready and eager to match its speed with everything on wheels.

It was for me. No matter what the price, if I had had the money, I would have bought it right then. But all I could do was look.

Barney said softly, "Five hundred horsepower, out of a hundred-and-seventy-three-cubic-inch motor."

That was the difference between engineering for a speed and converting to it. Here was a motor smaller than a Model A Ford motor, developing five hundred horse.

"At how many revs?"

"Eighty-two hundred a minute." He turned to look past me. "Hi, Lou."

Cregar was a tall man, slim, looked like a teacher. His name, some day, will rank with Miller and Duesenberg and Offenhauser, I'd bet.

"Hello, Barney," he said. "This one of your protégés?"

"Pete Elliot," Barney said.

All hands and left feet I was, mumbling something about, "Pleasure, Mr. Cregar." He had a strong grip for such thin, long fingers.

"Hot-rodder," Barney said, and winked.

"I use Cregar heads and carburetors, sir," I told him.

He smiled. "Oh, a customer of mine. And what kind of camshaft?"

"I reground my own," I told him. "It's a full-race grind."

"That's not very enjoyable for highway use, is it?"

"It doesn't idle very well," I admitted, "and it's not the best for acceleration, but it fits the rest of my equipment."

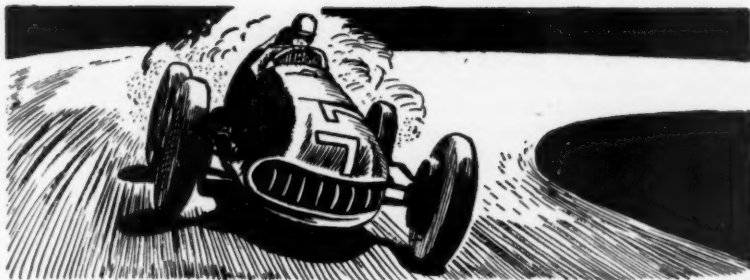
He looked at Barney. "These kids," he said. "Did you know that much as a kid, Barney?"

"I don't remember," Barney said. "I thought maybe you'd want to sell the Special." He nodded at the black beauty.

"I'll always sell a car, because I can always build another. Did you have a price in mind?"

Barney shook his head. "Did you?" "Thirty thousand."

"Just the car," Barney said. "Not the business."



"It cost me that much. It's handmade, all the way, Barney."

"Sure."

"It set a new one lap record, at the brickyard."

"I was there."

"It could be geared for the dirt, too."

"Maybe."

"Barney, it's worth every cent of that, every red cent."

"Sure it is. But not to me." Barney put a friendly hand on Mr. Cregar's shoulder. "Well, it was nice seeing you, Lou. You're looking fine and fit."

"Cut it out. You want that car, Barney?"

"At thirty thousand dollars," Barney said, "I don't want anything, except maybe my youth."

"But you are in the market?"

Barney nodded.

Mr. Cregar said, "Let's go and talk about this over a cup of coffee. I'll buy Pete, here, a malt."

I don't remember what the malt tasted like; I couldn't get the taste of that car out of my mouth. Barney and Mr. Cregar kidded each other back and forth, and I only half heard. They were sparing over the car I wanted to think of as mine.

Finally, Mr. Cregar said, "Half then, a half interest for twelve thousand. I cut into no purse under five hundred. And you get a top-line wheeler for her. And keep the name."

"You're starting to make sense," Barney said. "Keep talking."

"I've said it."

Barney was chewing one corner of his mouth, as he usually does before he says yes. "I'll let you know. Hold it open for a day. I'll phone before tomorrow noon."

"All right," Mr. Cregar said. "I'll see you later. It was a pleasure meeting you, Pete."

"It was a pleasure and an honor meeting you, Mr. Cregar," I said.

Barney chuckled. "That's my boy. Butter him up. We'll get him down a few dollars yet."

We went out, and the sun was just as warm, but it didn't seem as bright. Walking to the car, I wanted to glance into the garage again, for another glimpse of the Cregar Special. Then I remembered what Mr. Cregar had said

about a "top-line wheeler." That phrase didn't fit Pete Elliot.

Barney started the car. His eyes were straight ahead as he said, "If I did take Lou's offer, I know who I'd get. Rocky Revere, he's the man for that iron."

"No," I said quickly. "Oh, Barney, no. Gee, please, he should be your last choice. He'd ruin that car."

Barney was smiling, watching the traffic. "You boys don't like him, I know, the way he told you all off. But he's a good man behind the wheel. Nobody ever questioned Rocky's nerve."

"Maybe not his nerve, but his skill I'd question. He couldn't change a muffler. He's all-foot, Barney."

"All right foot and fine timing," Barney answered. "And as for the other, I don't want him for a mech. I want him behind the wheel. He's ranked sixth in the Association, Pete."

I started to argue some more and then realized it wasn't my car or my decision. No wonder Barney thought I had an outsize ego. Telling him about racing, that was good.

In the word battle between the rodders and the speedway boys, in all the arguments that raged in the racing publications, Rocky Revere pulled no punches. He didn't like the rods or the way our meets were run, or the boys who ran in them.

I suspected that what he liked the least was the crowds we were drawing in our roadster and jalopy races.

He had some points on his side; we didn't have the safety rules we should have had. That was his biggest gun, that and our youth. And the accident record piled up by the young drivers on the highway. Rocky didn't like us.

I'd seen Rocky drive, a number of times, and I hadn't liked what I saw, but maybe I was prejudiced. I thought he judged his passing clearance a bit close to the legal limit. I thought he followed too close and fought for the speed groove with more violence than skill. Smooth driving is fun to watch; a man can learn, watching a really talented pilot. Speed is easy; any brainless idiot knows how to press an accelerator. Skill is something else. It takes study and work and a true interest in the sport.

"A free chassis lubrication job for your thoughts," Barney said.

"I wasn't thinking of anything much."

"That Cregar Special you were thinking of, and eating your heart out. I'm sorry, Pete."

"That's O. K."

*You're too old to sulk, Pete Elliot, I said to me. Snap out of it, dope.*

In my mind I could see Rocky behind the wheel of the black sweetheart. I could see the dust and hear the whine of her five hundred horsepower. I could almost feel the sure-footed way she'd cling to a banked curve, the rocketing acceleration of her under the prod of my foot.

Barney said, "You'll have bigger disappointments before you're my age. Think of it from my standpoint. Think of the investment I'd have in the car."

I nodded. "I understand."

Barney chuckled. "Oh, Pete—we're still friends, huh?"

"Always," I said.

He pulled up behind my heap, in front of the garage, and across the street I saw Red Larson's Model A.

Red's about the best friend I have, but I wasn't in a mood to chin. I thanked Barney for the ride and climbed into my Cregar.

Red must have been watching for us; he came out the door next to the ramp as I ground the starter. "Hey," he said, "you trying to avoid me?"

"I guess," I said. "Things are bitter."

He came over to stare at me. "Now—what?" His light blue eyes weren't missing anything. "Where were you? Over at Lou Cregar's, weren't you?"

"Right."

"And you saw that dream buggy of his?"

I nodded. "Barney's interested in it. He might buy a part of it." I paused. "And put Rocky Revere into it."

"Hey," Red said. "Oh, no . . ."

"Oh, yes. He's ranked sixth in the Association. He's a talented man."

Red said bitterly, "Nuts to the Association." Then, "What is it, Pete? Aren't the rods good enough for you, any more?"

"They're going to have to be."

He looked at me quietly. "You're on their side, now, is that it? Boy, you've changed, haven't you? Some of the letters you wrote to *Rod and Track* . . ."

"I was younger," I said, "and dumber. They've got a case, Red, and we've got a part of one."

He stood at the curb, staring at me. "You know they're right," I said. "About safety hubs and Magnaflexing all the vital parts and a standard code of ethics and procedure. You know we should have all those things."

"We'll get all those things," he said. "But not Rocky Revere with them."

"I'll shake on that," I said. "That's a good enough program for me."

### The Big Chance

*[Pete's low spirits didn't last long. A couple of months later Barney did buy the Cregar Special. He put Rocky Revere behind the wheel, AND—he offered Pete a job as mechanic. A mech for the big time! A chance to travel the thunder road! Since Pete was under the legal age for the job, he had to pass a test to qualify. Then track after track for almost six months—with Rocky and the Cregar Special winning hands down.]*

Barney was convinced that he had the winning combination for the big challenge—the bricktrack at Indianapolis on Memorial Day. He was back at his garage waiting for the big event.

*Pete wasn't so sure of winning at Indianapolis. He still didn't respect Rocky's driving. Worse, he suspected that Rocky had won his present top rating by foul play. Pete believed Rocky had purposely caused the nearly fatal crash-up of a younger driver, and friend of Pete's, named Jed Marion.*

*Then one winter morning while Pete was at home, an unexpected phone call came from Barney. Rocky had backed out on Indianapolis. He was driving a newer car, a super-Cregar, at the brickyard. He had had only an oral contract with Barney.]*

When I came back from the phone, both Red and Mom were watching me.

"Oh, baby," Red said when I had told them. Then, "I wonder who Barney will get for the race. Do you think he'll want Jed Marion, Pete? I'll bet he could get Jed."

I shook my head.

"Who, then? I wonder who's going to get it?"

I looked at my mother as I said, "I am."

A moment her face was quiet, almost frozen. And then a smile thawed it and she said, "My baby—in the big one. I'll live through it, I guess. Congratulations, son."

Red's smile was as wide as his face and for a change, he had no words. In that great pause, the first seed of my uncertainty took root. It wasn't caused by any single reason; homesickness was a part of it, and Jed's accident, and the knowledge that though I had the folks' consent, they weren't going to be happy about this news.

Uncertainty might be too polite a word; I suppose the proper word was fear.

"Well, don't just stand there," Red said. "Shout 'hurray' or laugh or do a dance."

I nodded. "It's kind of sudden. I—It's—" I sat down in my chair.

The uncertainty didn't disappear completely, but some warmth came to me, a sense of anticipation. The big one, the brickyard—and Decoration Day.

And yet I knew I wasn't ready for it, not now. I'd driven the S-C quite often in practice spins, but that was a good many miles per hour this side of competition.

At the garage Barney was sitting in his corner office, smoking a cigar and staring out of the window when Red and I came in. He swiveled around in his chair, and stared at me for a few seconds. He looked like a man who was still in shock. "Maybe I said too much over the phone. I offered you the chance at the wheel because I know you wanted it, and you've worked for it. But I've been doing a lot of thinking, since then. I've been thinking of the boys who'll be at the five hundred, and the cars they'll be wheeling."

"And I'm not ready for that kind of company, is that what you mean?"

"I guess. Are you?"

"No."

Barney took a deep breath. Red muttered something I didn't catch.

Barney said thoughtfully, "There's Phoenix, in the spring, and a couple winter runs before that in Florida. There's the hundred-miler down-state, in Palm Grove. Are you ready to travel again?"

"If that will do it, I'm ready."

We worked. We pulled the pan off, and pulled her insides out. The head and block were integral on the S-C, so we had to pull her from the bottom.

At seven that evening I still hadn't had any dinner. I was cleaning my hands with a lanolin compound when I heard a footstep behind me.

I turned to face Jed Marion.

"Tearing her down, huh?" he said.

I nodded.

He took a breath. "You wouldn't need a mech, would you?"

"I'm not the boss, Jed," I said quietly. "Why do you want to be a mech?"

"I figured there's one car that has a chance against Rocky in the dream boat. That's this car—and you in it."

"Or you in it," I said. "That would be a lot better."

He shook his head. "Where's Barney? I work cheaply. I'll work for nothing, if he'll have me."

He was heading toward the office, where Barney was wrestling with the day's figures. I saw him enter the office, and I saw Barney look up. Then Red's roadster was coming in the wide doorway, blocking the view.

Red came over to pick up one of the S-C's pistons.

I said, "Jed Marion's in the office. He wants to be our mech."

"Jed Marion—? Are you serious? He

could have his choice of half a dozen cars. You're kidding, Pete?"

I didn't answer. Jed and Barney were coming across the concrete floor toward us. Barney's hand was on Jed's shoulder, and Jed was smiling.

Red whispered: "What a combination! Holy cow, what a combination!"

### What a Team!

*[A winning team? It looked as if it might be—especially when Jed's former boss, elder car-designer Colton Savage, tossed his lot with Barney's team. Pete had to struggle to build the confidence needed for competition with the big boys. But gradually the dream was coming to him, too.]*

Talk, talk, and work. Talk I liked and work I relished with people I admired. . . .

Every motor that had been in last year's race had been a local product—thirty-one of the thirty-three had been Meyer-Drake engines, the refined Offenhauser. And the Offenhauser had been the refined Miller. So the tradition went back, all the way back to Harry Miller.

And probably working for Meyer-Drake right now, some ex-hot-rodder will develop the new one—the refined Meyer-Drake. A name popped into my mind—Marion-Elliott. That would look good, cast into a block, or embossed on a valve cover.

"What are you grinning about?" Jed asked me.

"I've been dreaming," I told him, "of a motor called the Marion-Elliott."

"Isn't that silly?" he said. "I've been dreaming of a motor called the Elliott-Marion."

"Maybe we'll settle for conversions," I kidded along with him. "The Elliott cam and the Marion head, the Elliott pots and the Marion mag. What are we, rod or track?"

Work and talk. New brakes were designed by Mr. Savage, and with them, new magnesium wheels. Kincaid had agreed to experiment for a more desirable plug for our baby in return for certain promotional privileges. And Revolt came through with a new and improved mag. . . .

Then—Indianapolis.

. . . .

It's an impressive sight—two and a half miles of asphalt-coated bricks, three million, two hundred thousand bricks.

The race was still two weeks away, but we had our baby bedded down in a choice spot, and we were walking over to the cafeteria, Jed and I.

"They figure there'll be a hundred and eighty thousand people here Memorial Day," Jed said.

I said nothing.

"Watching you win," he went on. "How do you feel, Champ?"

"Not like a winner," I said. "Walt Faulkner here, Duke Nalon, Troy Ruttman, Henry Banks. Stop dreaming, Jed."

"No," he said. "I've got better advice—you start dreaming. Or dust off the old one. Confidence, Pete, confidence is the big thing in any sport."

We were coming into the clatter of the cafeteria, and I saw Barney and Mr. Savage sitting at a table with another pair of men.

Barney waved, and Jed said, "There they are."

There they were, all right. My knees were rubbery.

I heard Barney say, "Pete, this is Ralph DePalma and Tommy Milton." I heard Jed say, "Hi, gentlemen," and then I sat down before my knees gave up the battle.

That was only the start of it; I met them all before the big day. I met them, and got to know them, and cherish the memory. There are too many sound apples in the racing barrel for a gent like Rocky Revere to do much harm.

Johnny Parsons, Duke Dinsmore, Lee Wallard, Freddie Agabashian, Tony Bettenhausen, Mike Nazaruk, Jack McGrath, Duke Nalon, Mack Hellings, Johnny McDowell. . . . I shook their hands, and listened to their comments, and watched them wheel. It isn't anything I'll ever forget.

And then the day I came around the corner of the garage, after my driving test, I almost ran into another of the champs.

"Wel," he said, "Junior. Passed the test, I see."

"Hello Rocky," I said. His hand was out, and I ignored it.

A second, he studied me silently. Then, "It's like that, is it?"

I said nothing.

He grinned. "If you qualify, stay out of my way, Junior. I like room. Don't crowd me out there. If you qualify."

"I'll qualify," I told him. "And you'll get the legal clearance. And so will I. You don't scare me."

His face hardened, and he bunched a fist, "Why, you wise punk, I'll—"

Then Barney was there, and his voice was dry ice. "Move along, Rocky. I never talked about the contract, but if you don't want to be thrown out of the Association, move along, Rocky."

Rocky looked at us, and shrugged. "Poor losers," he said, and moved on.

### This Is It

I did qualify. Oh, we made it, together, the S-C and I. We finished to a heart-warming roar of acclaim from the stands.

In the pits Barney hugged me and

Jed hugged me, and Colton Savage's eyes were wet as he kept nodding, nodding, as though he'd known right along.

The confidence grew with that; I might even have become a bit cocky. I tried my best not to be, but as I told Jed, "I feel so—right, so poised and lucky. What is it?"

Jed grinned. "Cockiness. I suppose only a heel would say 'pride goeth before the fall.' But simmer down, huh?"

That would take a lot of doing. All the great ones had a word for me; people I didn't know came up to shake my hand and men who were legends came out of their way to wish me luck. Simmer down? I tried.

There was a telegram from the folks, congratulating me on my qualifying run, and wishing me luck. There was another telegram signed by all the members of the Santa Monica Timing Club. Red's name led the list.

They'd be listening on the radio, the telegram informed me, and they wanted to hear my name mentioned—a lot.

The night before the race, Jed and I sat in a pair of big chairs in a corner, and he told me about his rod days, his competition roadster days, and we talked about the fellows we both knew and what we thought of their rods.

In a brighter section of the lobby Mr. Savage and Barney were sitting with a couple of Association stars, and they were probably talking about the old outlaw days and the fairgrounds circuit. And the dust.

Both roads led to Indianapolis, just as the jet cars of the future will probably compete at Indianapolis. This was the big test, solidified by tradition, ennobled by the genial and fearless men who made up its exciting history.

I was proud and glad to be here, even though I now knew it wasn't the complete answer for me. This was a high point in the road, but not the whole trail.

At eight the next morning we were all out at the infield garage, and the infield was already a beehive of spectators. Everywhere I looked in the pits, the white clothed mechanics and attendants were frowning. There wasn't a laugh in the crowd. The firemen with their narrow funneled carbon dioxide guns were already on the alert, clocking them every time anyone got ready to start a motor.

Barney said, "These new tires are good, but it's a hot day. We'll watch the rubber, but take no chances if you discover something we don't know. Pull in. Take no chances. You understand that now, Pete?"

I nodded.

"Man my age—" Barney said, and shook his head.



## About the Author

William Campbell Gault has a teen-age son of his own, and that may be one explanation of how he happened to write *Thunder Road*. He has followed it with a second story about teenagers, *Mr. Fullback*, which you may also enjoy. Mr. Gault is author of over 300 stories and three mysteries. He grew up in Milwaukee, Wis., attended the University of Wisconsin for a short time, and has been an ice man, mailman, aircraft assembler, sole cutter in a shoe factory, and more!



Mr. Savage made a face, and winked at me.

Jed smiled. "Elliot-Marion," he said. "Marion-Elliot." I took a deep breath.

The twenty-minute bomb went off. Rocky's scarlet dream boat was in position and the movie queen for the day was talking to Rocky in front of a microphone.

Thirty-three of the fastest cars in America, eleven rows of cars three abreast, waiting for one of the biggest sporting events in the world. I took another deep breath and tried to maintain the confidence I'd had since my qualifying lap.

The starting line picture was taken, the National Anthem was played.

The drivers were climbing into their cars now, and I eased into the S-C. Barney came over with the battery cart.

And then from the public address system: "Gentlemen, start your engines."

The S-C coughed, purred, and Jed patted my shoulder. "Take 'em, boy. There isn't a better man or faster car on the track. Go get 'em."

Mr. Savage said quietly, "God be with you."

Barney said, "Well—well, all right. Take no chances!"

### ... Start!

Not a car stalled, which could have been a new record. The S-C sang quietly to herself, deep in her steel throats. In the car next to me on the right, Troy Rutman grinned. I grinned back.

Faster, the motor whine higher, the tension growing in me, Rocky's red car on the pole ahead seeming to taunt me. Oh, Pete Elliot, you're in the majors now, you're in the deciding game of the world series. Only there aren't eight other men to help you; you're out here alone, fighting the challenge of thirty-two of your country's finest.

You had better be hot today, Pete Elliot.

Faster, and the lines are even, the flag is ready and my heart seems to pound with the S-C's rhythmic beat.

The flash of green and the heaven-splitting racket of thirty-three accelerating engines and bedlam. Unthinking reflex it must have been, for I felt the S-C jump without being aware of my right foot's steady pressure.

Both cars flanking me to the right dropped back and the yellow streamliner in the row ahead swung wide, and there was a hole, and the S-C seemed to have a mind of its own. She slid through and past, and I rode in fourth position.

Only the first row cars were ahead of me now, and the outer one of these was dropping back, Joe Heaton's *Tru-Groove* four.

I moved past the *Tru-Groove*, but the scarlet job and Walt Faulkner's sweetheart were waging a two-car battle, a good fifty feet ahead as we shrieked into the rear straightaway.

They were setting a terrific first-lap pace, but gaining very little on my black speedster. And though I had more under my right foot, I didn't use it. For there was nobody coming up to challenge, and this looked like a sensible spot to be in until the deadlock up ahead was decided.

Close enough to challenge, but making no effort to, I trailed them into the front stretch. The fans were all up, in the stands, watching that duel in front.

As I went past our pit, I saw a single word on the huge blackboard for me. It was: "Nice."

It was nice, but through no fault of mine. The word should have been "lucky." The pair ahead grew smaller as we bore down on the huge south curve.

I knew I wasn't averaging the speed I had in my qualifying run, but this was no ten-lap sprint. Confidence came back; the first-lap hysteria was gone. I powered deeply into the curve before the back-off, but used no brake. Later, I'd try that spot of brake technique—if I had to. I don't like to go for the brakes at a hundred and thirty miles an hour. That I had to learn.

Smaller, the pair ahead, and now to my right, Clem Hardy's brown front-drive came sliding up. There was no reason to duel this early: there were hundreds of miles ahead.

The S-C matched the front-drive's gait in the long back alley. Nose and nose we paced it out, the tail pipes screaming at each other, the S-C seeming to strain at the leash. Into the bend Clem was almost imperceptibly gaining, but I was on the inside.

I led him out by ten feet, and my foot found the floor. The S-C seemed to lunge, despite her speed, and there was no longer any sign of the brown front-drive.

I knew I wasn't being smart, but the feel of that eager spurt made me power-

giddy. The spinning wheels of my baby ate into the long straightaway and the pits were a blur to my left. I was moving, I knew, climbing into the danger land of lost traction and though I realized this threat, I felt no fear.

And then, ahead, the blue deck of Faulkner's car came into view, and there was no blob of red to his left. He was riding alone now, in second place.

He grew bigger and bigger, and it began to scare me a little. Because there's never a time when Faulkner loafs, not in competition. And I was moving up on him; I must be going too fast for this stage of the race.

Coming out of the north turn, I saw he was hugging the lower track, and I felt a surge of relief. For it looked as though he was heading for the pits; he had been going slower than I thought, ready to pull in for some reason.

I went past and saw the scarlet leader ahead, the big loud man in the new, fast car and the S-C seemed to whimper in eagerness. They were just flashing past the judges' stand.

And with almost four hours of racing ahead, a fellow would be dumb to burn up his car this early, I tried to tell myself. But a hundred dollars a lap, and the S-C so ready? She'd never been better. Mr. Savage and Barney and Jed had worked on her, and no other pilot had that kind of savvy in his pit.

"Let's go, baby," I said, "let's move." It was like uncorking a tank of steam, it was like moving out in low gear. On the south bend, the tires whined, but I kept the heat to her—and for the first time, just touched the brake and powered out.

I don't know if Rocky was loafing, or if I was moving at a maniac's pace. I do know I came up behind him, two laps later, and swung wide to go by.

I kept an eye on him, remembering Jed, remembering his threat at the garage, but he couldn't have seen me early enough. Because I went by without an answering challenge, and rode into first place in the back lane.

And now I poured it into the black job, and heard her scream her defiance and heard the tires protest almost all around that traditionally treacherous north turn.

I could hear the shrieks of the fans in the huge stands and could see the clenched fists Barney and Jed held aloft as I swept past.

Even in that exultation of leading the field in the biggest race in the world, I knew it was no Pete Elliot show. Barney and Jed and especially Mr. Savage had taken the second fastest track car in the world, and made it the fastest. They'd improved on a masterpiece. The thinking was theirs; all I had to do was roll.

I rolled her, waiting for the challenge

to come up from behind, waiting for the red super car wheeled by the champ.

It didn't show. There was a cramp in my left leg and the slow dull start of a headache at the back of my head.

Nobody came up. And then, in the pits, I saw on the blackboard, two big R's. Right rear tire, that meant; come in for a precautionary tire change.

I didn't want to. How many of those challengers out there could slide past in the minute or so it took to change a tire? I was in front, but I wouldn't be after a stop.

Annoyance made my head throb. I'd seen no fraying fabric on that right rear. Barney was being too careful. I wasn't a boy any longer. I could take care of myself.

The south turn rolled past, the back straightaway melted under my spinning wheels, compression decelerated her as we came around the north turn and I headed for the lower track.

It wasn't too clear. There was a bottle of water Jed held to my dry lips, and I felt the tilt of the car as the long jack went under. I remember Barney saying, "Don't fret. Rocky'll have to make a stop soon, too. Roll her, boy—you're clear."

#### Who Has Passed?

A pat on the back, and I was gunning out, watching for the traffic behind. Some cars had gone by, but I didn't know what lap they were in; I'd passed too many laggards to keep track. I learned later it had been a fifty-eight-second pit stop.

The torment was coming now, the headache, the spine ache, the dry throat, and smarting eyes. The laps reeled by, and I thought of all the stories I'd read of driver fatigue but had never believed completely.

On the wide north turn, I saw Freddie Cain's six go into a slide. I saw it jolt and bounce downtrack, and then go sliding up the bank again, like a slow motion picture.

The yellow lights went on and the yellow flag was waving. The caution flag—drive cautiously and maintain position. It held for two laps while I kept a check rein on my baby. And then the track was clear, and we were back at work.

I'd lost track of time. I was one big ache and I knew my hands would have to be pried from the wheel. I kept my eyes straight ahead, and waited for the blob of red. Under me, the S-C sang, without pain, without fatigue, Barney's dream fabricated of steel.

If I was still in first place, I was winning some lap money for all of us. But who had passed me during that pit stop?

My left foot was asleep and tingling

with a thousand little knives. The S-C's whine seemed to mock me, to ask, "Who's doing all the work in this combination?" Any fool can move his right foot toward the floor; the genius is back there in the pits and in the garages and in the laboratories fashioning steel into dreams.

And then, on the big board in my pit, I saw the figure "10." Ten laps to go. I was rolling. The S-C's song never wavered, and we were making beautiful time. But was I leading?

To my right, the blob of red appeared. Moving alongside, moving by, and where had he come from? My foot sought the floor, and we went into the south turn like one wide car.

He had the car and he was the champ. I felt no apprehension. I could see the front of my speed shop, and the big sign overhead. The sign read: "MARION-ELLIOT."

He had the equipment and the nerve and the years of driving behind him. He was the champ. But there was no Colton Savage in his pit, and he didn't know a ring gear from a wrist pin. This was showdown time and a hundred and eighty thousand people were watching, and they were going to see the cheese in their champ.

I tried to tell myself.

I couldn't seem to gain an inch. I was riding the razor edge of traction limit, and I knew it, and couldn't gain an inch.

I screamed past the pits, and my blackboard was high and waving and the chalk marks read "EZ."

Easy? Were they crazy? Rocky pressing me for the lead, and they wanted me to take it easy! I'd take off, first, without wings.

I couldn't gain an inch. But neither could he. Front drives are better on the turns, and he might have taken me there, if he had the touch. He should have taken me there.

But he didn't. We paced it out, while my aches made my mind reel, while the scream of our combined motors seemed to lance into my brain.

Neither car showed an advantage, and I didn't look for the "EZ" on the board any more. It was no time for that, though I could see the black board waving frantically.

Was it a tire they were worried about, or the motor? It was the worst time in the race to take it easy.

Laps ground by, and now the big white flag was waving. One lap to go.

Tire or motor or whatever they were worrying about, I found the bottom with my right foot and milked every rev I could out of the S-C.

I thought I was gaining through the backstretch, but I knew I wasn't around the turn. He was edging by. I knew he'd cut in front if he thought he could

get away with it, and I was crowding disaster all through the whole turn.

He was even, going by, and then the S-C found some hidden cache of power and the relation was static for the moment and then she began to move up.

Up, up, past, moving with the speed of light, going out, shrieking down on the waiting checkered flag. Jed's and Barney's and Mr. Savage's work paying off in the last big mile.

#### Flash of the Flag

The flash of the flag, and I went by it all alone, a good five feet in front of Rocky Revere, last year's Triple-A champ.

The flash bulbs and the hugs and the hysteria were a jumbled mixture I couldn't sort out in my mind. A bottle of pop in my hand, and the left foot coming to life and Barney bathing my burning face with some solution.

And finally I found words: "Why the EZ? What did you mean by that? Didn't you want this race?"

"I never wanted anything more," Barney said. "Never."

"Then—why—?"

Jed was grinning and he answered for him. "Because you were *three laps ahead* of the jerk, Junior. He made three pit stops. He was burning his rubber up all the time. He's too heavy-handed for any tires invented yet."

We got out of there finally, after a million more pictures, and a thousand or so congratulations. We went to the hotel, and I stretched out in a big chair and relaxed for the first time that day.

Colton Savage had been quiet after his first congratulatory hug, and now he asked me, "Well, was it worth it?"

I nodded. "It was. I'll never forget. And I guess Barney's pretty happy."

The phone rang then, and it was for me. It was long distance, from Santa Monica. It was Red.

He was incoherent. He was delirious. I said, "Thanks, Red, and thank the rest of the gang. And you remember what I promised, Red, about coming back? Well, tell them that, too. I'm coming back. Get out the red carpet."

When I hung up, the room was quiet. Mr. Savage was smiling, and nodding in approbation. Jed winked at me. Barney's look was wondering.

I said, "You've had the day you wanted, Barney, right?"

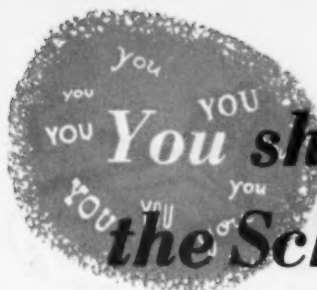
He nodded and grinned at me. "My heart wouldn't take another one of these, anyway." He took a breath. "Nor would Colton's." A pause. "You kids."

Then I looked at Jed, and he squared his shoulders. He didn't look like a kid, and I didn't feel like one.

"Elliot-Marion," he said.

"Marion-Elliot," I answered.

And Barney said, "What a combination. Oh, you rodders—"



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9. Mail all manuscripts FLAT (not folded or rolled) at the first class postage rate.

10. All manuscripts receiving national awards become the property of Scholastic Corporation, and no other use of them may be made without written permission.

11. No manuscripts will be returned. Remember to keep a carbon.

12. All students living in the following areas must submit entries before the regional closing date to these newspapers sponsoring Scholastic Writing Awards programs: Connecticut—*Hartford Courant*; southeastern Michigan—*Detroit News*; Capital district—*Washington (D.C.) Evening Star*. Regional winners will be included in the final national judging.

This is the 29th annual awards program for high school students established by Scholastic Magazines. Scholastic Writing Awards are approved by the Contest Committee of the National Association of Secondary School Principals.



# Chucklebait

## The Laughing President

Volumes have been written about the qualities of character that make Lincoln great. One of the most outstanding was his ability to take a joke—and tell one. For Lincoln appreciated humor and was himself a sparkling fountain of wit.

The number of humorous stories about Lincoln is almost endless. Here are a few that have become embedded in our folklore and are part of our history.

Lincoln's own favorite story about himself was one in which two Quakeresses were comparing Lincoln with Jefferson Davis. "I think Jefferson will win the war," said one.

"Why does thee think so?" asked the other.

"Jefferson is a praying man," the first replied.

"And so is Abraham a praying man."

"Yes, that is true. But the Lord will think Abraham is joking."

Like every President before and since, Lincoln was constantly plagued by office seekers. Once, when he was being treated for an annoying rash he purposely admitted a politician seeking a job for himself.

"That rash is all over me," he said, giving the doctor a sly wink. "What do you think I've got?"

"I'm afraid it may be smallpox," the doctor replied.

"Well, good-bye," the office-seeker said.

"Stop," Lincoln said. "I want to talk to you. Some folks couldn't take my election. Some couldn't take my rough Western manners. But now at last I've got something everybody can take!"

The man in search of an office hurried out.

Once a lady called on Lincoln to request a colonelcy for her son. She recited a long list of ancestors who had fought in various wars of the United States.

Lincoln listened patiently and courteously, then refused her request. "It's time," he said dryly, "we gave somebody else a chance."

Lincoln also had a gift for sharp retort. Once he received a foreign diplomat at the White House early in the morning. The diplomat found the President blacking his shoes. The visitor stared open-mouthed. "What, Mr. President," he asked, "you black your own shoes?"

"Certainly," replied the President of the United States. "Whose do you black?"

In a backwoods country court, when a trial jury was being drawn, the opposing lawyer challenged a man because of

his acquaintance with Lincoln. In a neighborhood where everybody knew everybody else this was not a serious matter.

The judge disallowed the objection.

Lincoln rose in his turn to examine the jurors. He asked each man whether he knew the opposing counsel. Two or three had answered in the affirmative when the judge interrupted. "Now, Mr. Lincoln," he said, "you are wasting time. The mere fact that the juror knows your opponent does not disqualify him."

"No, your honor," answered Lincoln. "But I'm afraid that some of the gentlemen may *not* know him, which would place me at a disadvantage."

Little love was lost between Lincoln and General George McClellan. McClellan's military tactics were of the wait-and-see type. After a long wait-and-see, Lincoln wrote McClellan this letter:

"My dear McClellan: If you don't want to use the Army I would like to borrow it for a while. Yours respectfully, A. Lincoln."

Gentlemen, if any of you should ever take a hand in another match at this game, remember that you must have a good bat and strike a fair ball to make a clean score & a homerun!



"Abraham Winning the Ball—The National Game, 3 Outs and 1 Run." This cartoon, published in 1860, refers to the three presidential candidates who struck out when Lincoln came loping into home base—the White House. Baseball was just becoming a popular national sport at the time.

From Lincoln in Caricature, published by Horizon Press, 1958

Remember to Enter the 1954 Scholastic Writing Awards

# Teaching Suggestions for This Issue

## Let Justice Be Done

**A Lesson Plan—** "The Counsel Assigned" (p. 8); "Five Minutes to Die" (p. 23)

In this issue the short story (p. 8) and the play (p. 23) are both concerned with characters accused of murder. Although the story takes place in Abraham Lincoln's day, and the play has a modern setting, the problems and topics for discussion which they present are similar.

## Activities

### 1. Discuss:

a. *The democratic concept of justice.* What safeguards does the individual citizen have in the democratic concept that an accused person is "innocent until proven guilty"? What rights does the accused have under law? (Mention his right to a fair trial, to a defense attorney, to freedom under bond before trial, to police protection from mob vengeance.) Are these rights, according to our laws, the same for any person, regardless of whether he admits or denies his guilt? And regardless of social standing, race, religion?

b. *Justice miscarried.* In "The Counsel Assigned," what was the general

feeling of the townspeople as to what punishment the boy John Wilson should receive? What, in "Five Minutes to Die," did the majority of people concerned believe about the guilt of Dix Wilson? For what reasons was the majority opinion in each case shown to be misguided? What is the difference between the kind of majority opinion represented in a jury's decision, and the kind represented by John Wilson's neighbors, and by the students and others who were "out to get" Dix Wilson?

Which accused person—Dix Wilson or John Wilson—do you think would have suffered the greater injustice, if the will of the mob had operated? Dix, because he was not guilty of the crime he was accused of? John, because he was younger than Dix, and thus had more to lose? Or would the injustice each would have suffered have been equal—in different ways? How does mob action batter down the freedoms guaranteed to us by the Bill of Rights?

2. Write two or three paragraphs covering each of the following situations:

a. The judge in "The Counsel Assigned" looks back on the trial of John Wilson in later life. Assume that Abraham Lincoln had not appeared at the trial, and that the boy had been sentenced to death. Describe, in the words

the judge might have used, how he would feel about this case as he looked back on it.

b. Suppose that the mob had lynched Dix Wilson before the full facts of Emily's murder were discovered. Describe, in words that Mr. Austin might have used, how Austin would have felt about this action, and how he would have felt about his own responsibility for its having taken place.

3. Mature students interested in further examining some of the problems of justice as they have been treated in literature might read and report to the class on such books as the following: *Bleak House*, by Charles Dickens; *Darkness at Noon*, by Arthur Koestler; *J'accuse*, by Emile Zola; *The Scarlet Letter*, by Nathaniel Hawthorne; *Cousin Pons*, by Honore de Balzac; *An American Tragedy*, by Theodore Dreiser; *Crime and Punishment*, by Fedor Dostoevski; *The Informer*, by Liam O'Flaherty.

## Hamlet Returns

The memorable J. Arthur Rank *Hamlet*, starring Sir Laurence Olivier, is once again appearing in U. S. movie houses—at popular prices.

*Hamlet* is the choice of many high school teachers when they select a Shakespearean play for classroom study. Not only is *Hamlet* one of the major tragedies by Shakespeare; it is also in many ways particularly suitable for a young audience. The central character—unlike Macbeth, Julius Caesar, Othello, and many other Shakespearean tragic heroes—is a young man. His problems, his thinking, his emotions, are those of a youth suddenly thrust into a perturbing and shattering adult situation. In this respect, *Hamlet* "speaks" in a special way to the adolescent, who on a less heroic scale is also emerging from the protected world of childhood to the often conflicting challenges of adult life.

Class discussion based upon the movie *Hamlet* and a reading of the original play can highlight for young students the relevance of many aspects of *Hamlet's* situation to their own problems of "growing up." The following discussion questions have this end in mind:

1. What kind of youth did *Hamlet* have? (Points to emphasize: the security of a happy home—an adored father, a mother devoted to her husband and son; intellectual interests—in his school work, music, the theatre; friendships—with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, for example.) What—in his youth—did *Hamlet* expect his future to be like? How



By Sleggs from "The Best Cartoons from Punch"  
"Isn't there anything we mustn't do?"

did the circumstances of his father's death and his mother's remarriage change the whole structure of Hamlet's life as it had existed during his childhood?

2. Why did Hamlet hesitate to avenge his father's death? (Mention his love for his mother, the possibility that the evidence suggesting that Claudius had murdered his father might not be what it seemed, the difficulty of rousing himself to an action which his mind told him was right, but which his emotions rebelled against. Mention also that there is no one "answer" to Hamlet's hesitation—that it is a subject which has engaged scholars in speculation for many centuries.)

3. Why do you think Hamlet behaved as he did toward Ophelia? Was it because she lacked the maturity to understand the problems Hamlet faced? Because she was too dominated by her father? Because Hamlet himself had become disillusioned about love? Because Hamlet was too distracted by concern over his family's problems to be able to concentrate on his love for Ophelia? Or do you think it was a combination of all these reasons? Do you think that the reasons that apply to Hamlet's rejection of Ophelia might apply today to a young person who was very unhappy about his home life?

4. In what ways would a modern youth be likely to face his problem differently from Hamlet? (What differences would our modern concept of justice make? Do we today respect and accept the motive of revenge as people did in Hamlet's time?)

### Using CAVALQUIZ

How do you use CAVALQUIZ? The chances are you've already found many uses for this popular new feature—as a check on reading comprehension, as a basis for class discussion, as an incentive to student writing, etc. If you have hit upon any novel procedures of your own while using Cavalquiz in class, we hope you'll write and tell us about them. In the meantime, here are some suggestions that may help you get the most out of this four-page study section of *Literary Cavalcade*:

#### 1. Class Activity

Some teachers remove Cavalquiz from student copies of *Literary Cavalcade* (center placement makes the four pages easily removable) when the magazines are distributed to the class. Later, when the magazine has been read, Cavalquiz is distributed to each student and used as follows:

a. "Quick Quiz" questions are answered as a check on reading retention.

b. Students write up answers to any

one of the "What Do You Think" sections of the "Quick Quiz."

c. All students do the vocabulary exercises in "Have Fun with Words"—then check their answers by exchanging copies.

d. Students who work the above sections faster than others may do the crossword puzzle on the second page of Cavalquiz.

#### 2. Composition Capers

If you have students who are interested in qualifying for the 1954 Scholastic Writing Awards (see p. 39), suggest that they follow the suggestions for original writing in the monthly "Composition Capers."

Writing Awards judges have found that the best entries in the Awards are often those which are the products of much experimentation and of several different drafts. Encourage your students to work on a story over a period of time, criticizing and revising it in accordance with the suggestions in each "Composition Capers" as it appears.

#### 3. Vocabulary Development

a. Have students pick out ten words from the issue which were unfamiliar to them when they came across them. Have them look up the meaning of each in a dictionary, and then prepare a two-part vocabulary exercise on the model of "Have Fun with Words," using the words they have selected. Students may then exchange their vocabulary exercises and try their luck at working each other's exercises out.

b. Set aside a period of oral "word history" reports such as that on *berserk* in this month's "Cavalquiz." You may first have to explain to students how word origins can be checked in a dictionary. (Suggested words with interesting backgrounds: glamour, porcupine, hospital, etiquette, sabotage, silhouette, caterpillar, bachelor, tantalyze, text, salary, venerable, tawdry, mortgage, bankrupt, candidate, hoodlum, promenade, scavenger, umpire, muscle, cornucopia, gossip, dismal, curfew.)

#### Composition Capers (p. 22)

This month's "Composition Capers" discusses the selection of vivid details in writing stories. As a "follow-up" activity after students have studied "Composition Capers," we suggest the following:

Consider the two characters and two scenes described in italics below—all of which might have a place in a story you wrote yourself. List on a separate piece of paper as many details as you can think of that would make the scene or character "come to life."

1. *a selfish, vain woman* (What details of her dress might suggest her

nature? How would she talk? What might her hands tell about her? What kind of mouth does she have?)

2. *a school dance* (What details of the decorations might suggest the gaiety of the setting? What are some of the things that would be noticeable about the dress, movements, voices, of the students present? What phrases overheard in conversation might suggest the kind of occasion this is?)

3. *a vigorous, determined man* (How would he move? What special, characteristic gestures might he have? What could his eyes suggest about him? How would you describe the set of his jaw?)

4. *a hot summer day at the beach* (What colors of sand, sea, sky, are noticeable? What effect does the heat have on these colors? What sounds—if any—would you associate with this setting? How would the sand feel underfoot? What mood would this setting produce?)

#### "Nancy Hanks" (p. 27)

This simply worded, appealing poem can serve as the frame for a Lincoln's Birthday radio or school assembly program.

First, appoint a committee responsible for looking up facts about Abraham Lincoln's life under the following headings: (1) Nancy Hanks, Lincoln's mother—her background, date of her death; (2) Tom Lincoln, Lincoln's father—his background, temperament, occupation; (3) Lincoln's childhood—where spent, type of home, family finances; (4) Lincoln's achievements in later life.

Have the committee arrange the information under each of these four headings into a narrative comment to follow each of the four stanzas of the poem. The comment should be phrased as an answer to Nancy Hanks' statements and questions.

A girl then reads the poem, and a different narrator chosen from the class reads the appropriate narrative comment after each stanza. Students may also choose recorded music to be played at the beginning and end of the program—and, if they wish, at intervals during the reading.

#### Answers to "Cavalquiz" Questions (pp. 19-22)

Quick Quiz: "The Counsel Assigned": A. 1-John Wilson; 2-The Judge; 3-Abraham Lincoln; 4-Mrs. Wilson. B. 1-b; 2-a; 3-b; 4-b; 5-a; 6-b. "Five Minutes to Die": e-1; d-2; f-3; X-4; g-5; a-6; b-7; c-8. "Thunder Road": F-1; F-2; T-3; T-4; T-5; F-6; F-7; T-8; F-9; T-10.

Have Fun with Words: I. d-1; f-2; i-3; j-4; h-5; b-6; c-7; e-8; a-9; g-10. II. 1-parleys; 2-rament; 3-volatile; 4-prudence; 5-indisputable; 6-antidote; 7-impediments; 8-animate; 9-depraved; 10-infallible.